

AN OUTLINED INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

by

JOHN WADDEY

*Director, East Tennessee School of
Preaching and Missions*

VOLUME II

Job - Malachi

1987

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D E D I C A T I O N

To the many students, past and present, of the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions who have shared the joy of searching the Scriptures along with me. May they carry the lessons learned into all the world as they preach the good news.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Waddey was born in Nashville, Tennessee in 1938. He was baptized by George Prosser in 1955. Parker French encouraged him to become a preacher. One year after his conversion, he preached his first sermon at the Blackmon congregation near Murfreesboro, Tennessee. He is married to the former Reba Duncan and is the father of four daughters; Lourene, Lesia, Becky and Rachel.

His schooling was received at the College of Evangelists and Itawamba Junior College. Most of his education was gained from his own study and experience. In his twenty-six years of preaching, brother Waddey has served churches in Mississippi, Colorado and Tennessee. Evangelistic work has carried him into twenty-seven other states. He has made nine overseas trips, visiting mission works in nineteen foreign nations. Over the years he has spoken at a number of special lectureships at Christian colleges, Schools of Preaching and congregations.

Since 1968, John Waddey has worked with the Karns congregation of Knoxville, Tennessee. Annually that church hosts a World Mission Workshop. He has planned and directed that program since moving to Karns.

Each year he conducts several revival meetings. He is an officer of the Teenage Christian Camp. He has engaged in four public debates and a number of radio and television talk shows where controversial subjects were discussed.

For eleven years brother Waddey conducted a weekly radio broadcast. For seven years he wrote a weekly newspaper column. Through the Rocky Mountain News of Denver, Colorado, over 50 million copies of his lessons were circulated. His articles are carried in the *Gospel Advocate*, *World Evangelist*, *Words of Truth*, *Christian Echo*, and seven other brotherhood papers. He formerly served as editor of the *STAR* mass-mail evangelistic magazine.

In 1970 he assisted the Karns elders in establishing the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions and continues to serve as a teacher in it. In the fall of 1982 he was appointed director of the school.

In addition to his evangelistic duties, Waddey is past president of the Tennessee Volunteers for Life, a pro-life group fighting the abortion evil. He has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Right to Life Committee and as trustee of that organization's Educational Foundation. He writes and speaks on the related issues of abortion, euthanasia and suicide.

John Waddey has authored 22 books and has written chapters for 21 other published volumes and 13 pamphlets.

OTHER BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR:

Searching the Scriptures, 2nd Edition, Cloth. A large variety of newspaper articles and sermons.

Christianity vs. Liberalism, Cloth. Also available in two volumes in paper. More newspaper articles and sermons.

The Great Commission And You, Paper. Sermons on world evangelism and suitable for class use.

Growing in the Grace and Knowledge of Christ, Paper. Sermon outlines on Christian living and basic Bible doctrines. Suitable for studies with new converts.

Sermons on Saints and Sinners, Paper. Sermon outlines on Bible characters.

The Anatomy of Sin, Cloth. Full length sermons.

An Outlined Introduction to the Old Testament, Vol. I, Cloth. Author's class notes and materials on Genesis through Esther.

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Introducing the Church of Christ, Fifty-two lessons on all aspects of the church. Designed for Bible classes or sermon material.

Word Portraits of Bible Characters, Fifty-two sermon outlines on Bible personalities. Also suitable for class studies.

THE PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

This is the second volume of *An Outlined Introduction to the Bible*. The first two volumes cover the Old Testament, and the third will deal with the New Testament.

These are outline studies. Each book is outlined, with the major points and lessons being noted. The serious Bible student will find such a work to be very helpful in getting all of these books in mind, seeing the chain of history running through them, and observing the unfolding of God's dealings with His people.

The Old Testament portion of the Bible is rich in history, prophecies, and stories of numerous interesting characters. Books like Psalms and Isaiah tell of the coming Messiah. Other books like Daniel, Joel, and Micah proclaim the coming of the Lord's kingdom or church. As someone has said, the Old Testament reveals the New Testament and the New Testament explains the Old Testament. Therefore, these books on the Old Testament are very important in an overall understanding of the Bible.

Brother John Waddey is the author and has taught this course for many years as teacher and now Director of East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions in Knoxville, Tennessee. He has a rich background in Bible study, preaching, teaching, and writing and is, therefore, fully qualified to present this material for our consideration.

Having known brother Waddey for many years, and having published several of his books, I can

wholeheartedly commend him and his work to you.

J.C. Choate
Winona, Mississippi
September 1, 1987

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Few earthly joys equal that of studying the precious word of God. For twenty-eight years that has been the principal vocation of the author's life. This volume has grown out of his classroom work in the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions. It consists of his class-notes on the books of Job through Malachi.

The idea of preparing such teaching materials came while on a mission trip to the heartland of West Africa in 1966. There, in a missionary bookstore, the author found a copy of Robert Lee's *Outlined Bible*. Being impressed, he began to prepare his own outlines upon his return home. The lessons enclosed are the third edition of his outlines, each being considerably larger than the other. They have been used repeatedly in the college classroom as well as that of the local church.

Since each lesson was prepared independently for a given course, it is to be expected that there be repetition in some areas.

The materials are not designed for the critical scholar, rather they are for the student who wants to get acquainted with the basic and practical information about the various books of the Bible. Church Bible classes can make good use of them as can the preacher in his expository work.

A third volume covering the New Testament books will soon be complete.

If this book proves helpful to those who hunger and

thirst for righteousness, then the author's work will be well rewarded.

“I will meditate on thy precepts,
And have respect unto thy way,
I will delight myself in thy statutes;
I will not forget thy word.”

(Psalms 119:15-16)

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THE CHRISTIAN AND THE OLD TESTAMENT

Somehow a terrible misconception has been “leaked” in many areas concerning the attitude of the church of Christ toward the Old Testament. Some have concluded that we do not believe in that part of God’s word. Nothing could be further from the truth. We accept every word of that Testament and make constant use of it in our teaching. There are great benefits to be derived from a careful study of the Old Covenant.

IT IS GOD’S INSPIRED WORD

When Paul said that “Every scripture is inspired of God” (II Tim. 3:16), he obviously included the holy scriptures that the Jews possessed. When Jesus affirmed that “the scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35), only the Old Testament was in existence. The Lord even went so far as to say that if we believe not Moses’ writings we cannot believe in Christ himself (John 5:47). In Luke 24:44-45, Jesus explained that the law of Moses, the prophets and the psalms were “the scriptures” or God’s holy writings. This we believe and teach.

IT ANSWERS MANY QUESTIONS

The old covenant provides solid answers to life’s most serious and perplexing questions. We would have no sure knowledge of the origin of the cosmos did we not have

Genesis and other Old Testament verses that tell us God spoke these things into existence (Psa. 33:6).

We would have no strong reply to the wild speculations of the evolutionist if God's Word did not give us the story of man's creation in Genesis, chapter one and two. Likewise, man's relation to God would be a mystery were it not for the creation record.

We could only guess as to the reason for sin and the curse being upon man and creation were it not for Genesis, chapter three.

Such questions as the origin of the various nations and languages are answered only in the Genesis account. The riddle of the vast fossil record inscribed across the face of the whole earth is explained by the record of the flood in Noah's day. A hundred other questions are similarly answered in this book.

A FOUNDATION

The Old Testament is the foundation upon which the new covenant was erected. "So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ" (Gal. 3:24). The law was the shadow of good things to come (Heb. 10:1). It foreshadowed the coming Christian age. Christ fulfilled all of those prophecies written in the old scriptures concerning him (Luke 24:44-45). The New Testament takes up just where the Old leaves off. It has well been said, "The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed; the New Testament is the Old revealed."

A HISTORY

The Old Testament is a rich source of spiritual food for Christians. It provides multitudes of faith building lessons. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning . . ." (Rom. 15:4). Young Timothy had been taught those sacred writings from childhood and they had made him wise unto salvation (II Tim. 3:15).

EXPLAINS NEW TESTAMENT TERMS

When one opens the New Testament he is immediately confronted with scores of institutions, persons and events that would forever be a mystery were it not for the Old Testament. What would we know of Melchizedek or Aaron, Moses or David without the Old Testament? What would we do with the hundreds of quotations from the Old Testament without the context from which they came? Would we understand the allusion to sacrifices and the temple had we only our New Testament?

PROFIT FROM ITS CHARACTER STUDIES

In Hebrews, chapter eleven, the writer draws numerous lessons from the lives of Old Testament saints. So can we profit from all of its characters. We learn lessons both of things to observe and things to shun. "Now these were our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted" (I Cor. 10:6).

EVIDENCE OF ITS PROPHECIES

Jesus said that the Jew's scriptures bore witness to him (John 5:39). The angel declared that Jesus was the spirit of prophecy (Rev. 19:10). Peter told Cornelius that all the prophets bore witness of Christ (Acts 10:43). The 300 plus prophetic details of Christ's life and ministry provide an overwhelming basis for belief in him as God's Son. The same is true of prophecies relating to the church.

Truly, we should be grateful to God for the Old Testament and read and study it thoroughly. However, it must be stated that:

IT IS NOT OUR RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE

As Christians we are under Jesus and his New Covenant. Hear Paul, "But now we have been discharged from the law" (Rom. 7:6). Again, he states that the old law "passeth away" and the new remains (II Cor. 3:6-11). Christ "abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances" (Eph. 2:15). He took the Old Covenant out of the way, nailing it to his cross (Col. 2:15, 16-17). We have a better covenant, not like the one made on Sinai. That Old Covenant is becoming aged and is nigh unto vanishing away (Heb. 8:6-13). When Peter would have equally honored Moses, the law giver, Elijah the prophet, and Christ, God spoke from His throne saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matt. 17:3-5).

While we thank God for preserving for us the Old Testament, we look to the New for answers to such

questions as:

How to be saved? How to worship God acceptably?
How to live for Christ?

JOB – THE SUFFERING SERVANT

Key Verses: 1:21, “. . . Naked came I out of my mother’s womb and naked shall I return thither: Jehovah gave, and Jehovah hath taken away; blessed be the name of Jehovah.”

23:10, “. . . when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”

Key Persons: Job, a patriarchal chieftan of Uz, a godly man who is suddenly robbed of his children, his wealth and his health;

His wife, who unconsciously becomes a tool of Satan urging Job to renounce God;

His three friends of long standing: Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar. These three being wise men (philosophers) discuss with Job the reasons for his misfortune. They, too, inadvertantly are used by Satan to try to destroy Job.

Elihu, a youthful observer, who injects himself into the discussion;

Jehovah in heaven who is proud of Job’s righteous life and allows him to be tested to prove his loyalty;

Satan, the adversary and accuser of God’s children who is determined to discredit and destroy Job.

Key Thought: Why do the righteous suffer?

Key Word: Tried.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. Author:

A. Unknown.

1. “The only tradition which has come down to us with respect to the authorship of the Book of Job ascribes it to Moses.” Aben Ezra, 1150 A. D. (?).
2. The Talmud attributes it to Moses.
3. Some have suggested Solomon or some other inspired writer of a later period.

B. Julius Brewer wrote that the book was written by one who had been “fiercely furnaced in the blast of a soul that had struggled in earnest.”

II. About the Book:

A. Named after its principal character. We derive the English pronunciation from the Septuagint and the Vulgate.

B. Date: The date of writing is unsure, with theories ranging from pre-Mosaic times to the 3rd century B. C.

1. The book itself gives no indication as to time of authorship.
2. If Moses wrote the book the date would fall between 1500-1400 B. C.
3. The events may have occurred long before they were written in book form.

C. Type of Literature:

1. It is dramatic poetry with a prose narrative for introduction and closing.
2. It is based on a true historical episode (Ezek. 14:14, 20; Jas. 5:11).
3. Job is wisdom literature. "... intuition or insight was the method of Hebrew wisdom and the epigrammatic proverb its form. The Jewish wise man had no argument to sustain, no chain of reasoning to follow. He presents his truth with the simple assurance of one who has seen" (W. T. Purkiser).
4. Hebrew poetry was expressed in a style called parallelism.
 - a. Thoughts are expressed not once but twice or more.
 - b. The lines may be synonymous or antithetic.
5. To fully appreciate and understand the book, one must visualize the scenes so uniquely described. The message is directed to the feelings and imagination.
6. "Poetry is as much understood by the heart as by the brain" (H. L. Ellison).

D. Period of History:

1. No indication of the time is given.
2. Internal evidence suggests that the events took place in the patriarchal period prior to 1450 B. C.
3. The father of the clan was both priest and

teacher.

4. No mention is made of the Law of Moses, the Hebrew nation or the Levitical priesthood.
5. The situation in the book of Job could have occurred in Gentile society after 1450 B. C.

E. Purposes:

1. To probe the question, will a man serve God for nothing?
2. To reveal that suffering in itself is not proof of God's displeasure.
3. To remind us that God is always keeping careful watch over his people.
4. To defend and declare the integrity and innocency of Job.

F. Message: The book teaches that men should be righteous, not simply to gain peace of mind, health, wealth or even eternal life. These are rewards and by-products of righteousness. God wants us to serve him because we love him and because it is the right thing to do, not because of what we can get from him.

G. Opinions of notable men about the book:

1. Job is acclaimed the Shakespeare of the Old Testament.
2. C. F. Kent calls Job the Matterhorn of the Old Testament.
3. The book is described as universal in its message, appealing to all men of all ages.
4. Lord Tennyson called it "the greatest

poem.”

5. Carlyle labeled it “one of the grandest things ever written with pen.”
6. Martin Luther described it as “more magnificent and sublime than any other book of Scriptures.”
7. Victor Hugo wrote, “The book of Job is perhaps the greatest masterpiece of the human mind.”
8. Ewald describes it as “the most beautiful, and, at the same time, the most elevated production of the whole literature of Israel.”
9. T. M. Bennett says, “The book of Job is one of the most modern of the Old Testament. Its characters are still found in our midst, and its problems still demand a solution.”
10. A. B. Davidson compares the book of Job to Jacob wrestling with the unknown God who finally revealed himself to him and blest him.

H. Job and the Old Testament:

1. The text of Job provides numerous quotes from several Old Testament writers.
2. There are 15 quotes in the Psalms, 5 in Proverbs, 4 in Isaiah, and 18 in others, for a total of 42.

I. Job and the New Testament:

1. There is only one direct quote in the New Testament (I Cor. 3:19).

2. James 5:11 alludes to Job's patience.
 3. Two passages have Messianic implications: 14:14-15; 19:25-27.
- J. Some clues to help in interpreting Job:
1. It is essential to read not just a verse or a chapter, but an entire speech at a time.
 2. Remember that the book contains words of Satan; words of Job's wife urging him to renounce God; words of his friends trying to convict him of sin he is not guilty of, basing their thoughts on erroneous human philosophy; and words of Job, bewildered, confused, embittered and sometimes rash and hostile towards God. None of these are God-given and therefore should not be quoted as proof texts.
 3. Inspiration guarantees that we have a true and accurate record of what was spoken. It does not mean that every word recorded is the "mind of God" or that every word is recommended for us. We must always discern between the words of God and the words of uninspired men who are simply quoted.
 4. Since Job is poetry of the highest order, without some orientation in poetic appreciation, most of us will be ill-prepared to study and understand the book.
 5. The King James text of Job. A. B. Davidson writes, "Of the English versions, the Authorized Version appears at its worst in

this book. It frequently obscures and several times misses the meaning entirely. The Revised Version (of 1881 J. H. W.) has done much to make the book intelligible to English readers." (*Cambridge Bible Commentary on Job*). The Revised Standard Version will prove helpful as a study tool for Job.

6. Our manner of thinking inherited from the Greeks is one of general terms and abstract conceptions. In Job's age, men thought in concrete terms and particular cases.
 7. In the book of Job we see progressive revelation. The writer challenged the idea that all sufferers are sinners, and with God's help introduced the idea that some sufferers are godly souls. Later Isaiah showed us that a sufferer could actually be a Savior.
- K. Many textual problems surround the book, resulting mainly from the attempts of translators to amend the text to rid it of difficulties. The Septuagint is especially faulty in the book of Job.

III. *About the Man, Job:*

- A. He was a real historic person, not mythical or symbolic (Ezek. 14:14; Jas. 5:11).
- B. His home was the land of Uz (Job 1:1).
 1. On the border of Edom (Lam. 4:21).
 2. Southeast of Palestine near the Dead Sea.

- C. His family:
 - 1. Children: seven sons and three daughters (Job 1:2).
 - 2. A wife: It being an age of polygamy, it is noteworthy that he had but one wife.
- D. His wealth: seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses. He was greatest of all the children of the east (Job 1:3).
- E. His character:
 - 1. He was perfect, i.e., mature and complete.
 - 2. He was upright, straight in his dealings.
 - 3. He feared God with a reverent respect.
 - 4. He turned away from evil in his moral conduct (Job 1:8).
 - 5. He was sympathetic toward the unfortunate (Job 30:25).
- F. He was a “Wise Man” (Job 15:2).
 - 1. This meant far more than just brilliant; it was an honored title for respected philosophers and counsellors (Job 4:3).
 - 2. Among the ancient peoples, the wisdom of the race was passed along to others through brief maxims and aphorisms that were easy to recall.
 - 3. The wise men were a group distinct from priests and prophets. They collected the wisdom of the world and taught it to their fellowmen.
- G. His religious life: He personally feared God and continually led his family in sacrificial

worship (Job 1:5). This indicates the patriarchal form of worship.

- H. His name means “one who is persecuted” or, “one who repents.” Job was a very common name among the ancients.

IV. *About Job’s Wife and Friends:*

- A. His wife: Satan could have destroyed her with Job’s children. Instead he used her to try to destroy Job.
 - 1. She urged Job to do just what Satan had said he would (compare 1:11 and 2:9).
 - 2. Her faith was shallow and unable to stand the testing.
- B. His friends:
 - 1. The three friends represent four kinds of authority in religion.
 - 2. Eliphaz claimed a religious experience, basing his arguments on dreams and visions (4:12-17).
 - a. He represents the true patriarchal chieftan; grave, dignified and intellectual.
 - b. He was a dogmatic man of strong prejudices.
 - c. He was cold and offered little comfort.
 - d. He descended from Esau (Gen. 36:11).
 - 3. Bildad based his authority on religious traditions.
 - a. He relied on ancient proverbs (8:

- 8-10).
- b. He did not reflect much originality or independence of thought.
- c. His past answers seemed to have been prepared beforehand.
- d. He descended from Abraham and Keturah (Gen. 25:2).
- 4. Zophar was a practical man of sound common sense.
 - a. He appealed to human experience and wisdom (20:2-5).
 - b. His language was more violent and offensive.
 - c. He represents the prejudice and narrow-minded bigotry of mankind, thinking he knew all.
- 5. Elihu claimed to speak for God by inspiration (32:8).
 - a. He appears to be a younger man who was an observer of the discussion (32:6).
 - b. He was an impetuous youth.
 - c. He sought to defend God, arguing that affliction is the chastisement of a loving Father.
 - d. He was a descendant of Nahor, Abraham's brother (Gen. 22:21).
- 6. The friends argued that all suffering is the result of personal sin, therefore Job's great suffering proved him to be a great sinner.

7. The friends felt threatened. If a man of such high reputation could suffer such misfortune, the same thing might happen to them. If they could convince Job to confess personal sin, then they could protect their own security.
8. The poet pictures the friends in a manner that makes them to be more pitied than Job. They were smug in their orthodoxy, too sure of their answers to life's problems.

V. *Job and the Liberal Critics:*

- A. As with every other book of Scripture, the unbelieving liberal scholar dares to challenge the integrity of the book of Job.
- B. An example of their attempts to discredit the book's inspired origin:
 1. Liberal Bernhard Anderson writes: "It is generally agreed that the author of the poetic section did not compose the story that appears in the prologue and epilogue."
 2. "... in short the author took a well-known story and placed his poetic meditations between the first part and the conclusion, substituting his own poetry at the point where Job's friends come to console him." (*Understanding the Old Testament*, pp. 485, 486).
- C. We reject such unproven assertions and hold to the age-old belief of a single inspired author.

VI. *Some Interesting Facts About Job:*

- A. George Barton's *Archeology and the Bible* tells of a Babylonian Job who had an experience like our Biblical Job. This account is thought to date from about 1200 B. C. (p. 491ff).
- B. Job's disease is thought to be a form of leprosy complicated by elephantiasis.
- C. The ashes he sat among (2:8) was literally the dung hill or village refuse dump.
- D. Job's ten grown children, all from one wife, suggests a minimum age of 50 years for Job, and more likely 70 years at the time of his catastrophe. If he were 70 when the calamity struck, then his 140 years following meant God doubled his years of reward.
- E. The book of Job is described as a *theodicy*, i.e., a vindication of the justice of God in allowing evil to exist.
- F. It is appropriate that the oldest book of the Scriptures should deal with mankind's oldest problem.
- G. Ancient men thought that "virtue was rewarded with prosperity, health, and long life; conversely, sins, they thought, were punished by poverty, sickness and early death." They were mistaken. This is Job's message.

VII. *A Simple Outline of Job:*

- A. Historical Introduction (Chapters 1-2).
- B. Cycles of Speeches (Chapters 3-41).
- C. Historical Conclusion (Chapter 42).

OUTLINE OF JOB:

- I. *Job Before the Trial (1:1-5).*
 - A. The good man described (1:1).
 - B. His family (1:2).
 - C. His wealth (1:3).
 - D. His religious practice (1:4-5).
- II. *The Controversy Between God and Satan (1:6-2:10).*
 - A. Jehovah's pride in Job (1:6-8).
 - B. Satan's accusation: Job is a materialist (1:9-11).
 - C. God allows Job to be tested within certain limits (1:12).
 - D. Disaster strikes Job (1:13-22).
 - 1. Sabeans took his oxen and asses, killing his servants (1:13-15).
 - 2. Lightning destroyed his sheep and their keepers (1:16).
 - 3. Chaldeans stole his camels and killed their attendants (1:17).
 - 4. A tornado killed all his children (1:18-19).
 - 5. Job's faithful response (1:20-22).
 - E. Satan's second scheme (2:1-10).
 - 1. God's pride in Job's faithfulness even under extreme duress (2:1-3).
 - 2. Satan's evil accusation (2:4-5).
 - 3. Permission is given to further test Job (2:6).
 - a. God believed that he could trust Job to remain faithful to him in spite of everything Satan might use to break him.

- b. From this point of view God honored Job by such confidence.
 - 4. Satan afflicts Job with suffering worse than death (2:7-10).
 - a. The nature of his affliction; boils from head to toe (2:7-8).
 - b. His wife urges Job to renounce God (2:9). She was likely Satan's most potent weapon against Job.
 - c. Job's faith holds fast (2:10).

III. *Controversy Between Job and His Friends (2:11 - 37:24).*

- A. The three friends introduced (2:11-13).
 - 1. Eliphaz, the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite (2:11).
 - 2. Shocked at his condition, they silently mourn with him seven days (2:12-13).
- B. Job laments his plight in an emotional outburst (3:1-26).
 - 1. He curses the day he was born (3:1-10).
 - 2. He wonders why he was not still-born; that would have been better than his misfortune (3:11-19).
- C. The first speech of Eliphaz and Job's rejoinder (4:1 - 7:21).
 - 1. Eliphaz argues that God is just (4:1-5:27).
 - a. He accuses Job of impatience.
 - b. His thesis set forth: "Who ever perished, being innocent?" (4:7-11).
 - 1) In that age men did not conceive that suffering was the

work of some super-human power that was hostile to God. They thought all suffering was punishment for personal sin.

- ° 2) They were mistaken.
- c. His claim to speak authoritatively was based on an alleged supernatural experience (4:12-21).
- d. He argues that the wicked are destined for trouble (5:1-7). He ruthlessly charges Job with being responsible for his children's deaths (5:3-6).
- e. He recommends that Job repent of his "obvious" sins (5:8-16).
- f. He exhorts Job to accept the discipline and return to God (5:17-27).
- 2. Job responds to Eliphaz' assertions (6:1-7:21).
 - a. He complains that Eliphaz showed no understanding or comfort (6:1-7).
 - b. He begs God that he might die (6:8-13).
 - c. He protests that his friends had failed him like a dry stream (6:14-23).
 - d. He challenges them to point out his sin (6:24-30).
 - e. Job speaks to God, bemoaning his affliction (7:1-10).

- 1) He could not sleep (7:4).
- 2) His disease was loathsome (7:5).
- 3) He pleads for mercy lest he perish (7:7).
- f. He remonstrates against God (7:11-21).
 - 1) He feels that God deals with him as a dangerous sea-monster (7:12).
 - 2) Even in his sleep he was tormented by fear (7:13).
 - 3) He begs God to tell him why it was happening (7:17-21).
- D. The first speech of Bildad and Job's reply (8:1-10:22).
 1. Bildad reproves Job (8:1-22).
 - a. He argues that God destroyed Job's children because of their sin (8:3).
 - b. He urges Job to repent (8:5).
 - c. He bases his arguments on the teachings of the ancient fathers (8:8).
 - d. By an analogy from nature, he warns Job to repent (8:11).
 - e. He offers hope for brighter days if Job repents (8:20).
 2. Job's answer to Bildad's words (9:1 - 10:22).
 - a. Job acknowledges that no one can be just before God (9:1).
 - b. He confesses God's great power (9:5).

- c. He charges God with irresponsible judgments (9:13).
 - d. He speaks of the brevity of human life (9:25).
 - e. Job protests his innocence (9:27).
 - f. He complains of his treatment (10:1).
 - g. He reminds God that He made him (10:8).
 - h. Job bemoans his situation as hopeless (10:14).
 - i. He asks God, "why did you let me be born?" (10:18).
- E. The first speech of Zophar and Job's rebuttal (11:1 - 14:22).
 - 1. Zophar rebukes Job for defending himself (11:1-20).
 - a. He argues that Job deserves even more punishment that he has received (11:1).
 - b. He reminds Job that mortal man cannot understand the ways of God (11:7).
 - c. He calls on Job to repent and return to God (11:13).
 - 2. Job's defense to Zophar's attack (12:1 - 14:22).
 - a. He protests their treating him as a fool (12:1).
 - b. They had not told him anything new (12:7).
 - c. He acknowledges God's wisdom and

- power (12:13).
- d. He reminds his friends that he is not inferior to them (13:1).
 - e. He desires to speak with God about his case (13:3).
 - 1) He brands the advisors as forgers of lies (13:4).
 - 2) He tells them to “shut up” (13:5).
 - 3) He charges them with misrepresenting God (13:7).
 - 4) He labels their wisdom as worthless (13:12).
 - f. He wants to confront God even if it means death (13:13).
 - g. He had only three requests of God (13:20).
 - 1) Do not abandon me (13:21).
 - 2) Do not terrorize me (13:21b).
 - 3) Show me my sin (13:23).
 - h. Job laments his sorrows (14:1).
 - i. He feels there is more hope for a felled tree than for him (14:7).
 - j. He wishes there was life beyond the grave (14:13). Our Christian knowledge of immortality had not yet been revealed to men (II Tim. 1:10).
 - k. He wonders, is man just another part of the material world to be destroyed in time? (14:18).
- F. Second speech of Eliphaz and Job’s answer

(15:1 - 17:16).

1. Eliphaz' angry attack (15:1-35).
 - a. He charges Job with sin because of his words of defense (15:1-6).
 - b. He asks Job, "how dare you reject our advice" (15:7-16).
 - c. He warns that desolation awaits the wicked (15:17-35).
2. Job's reply (16:1 - 17:16).
 - a. He labels their advice as that of enemies, not friends (16:1-5).
 - b. He describes his pitiful plight (16:6-17).
 - 1) Chapter 16:7 - 17:16 is a soliloquy.
 - 2) He had lost his family (16:7).
 - 3) He had lost all his possessions (16:8).
 - 4) He was persecuted (16:9).
 - 5) He was as one attacked by a wild beast (16:12a).
 - 6) He felt like a target shot through with arrows (16:12b).
 - 7) He was like a besieged city (16:14).
 - 8) He was nigh unto death (16:15).
 - c. Job calls upon the earth to not hide his innocence (16:18).
 - d. He begs for God's help against his enemies (17:3). He claims that decent men will be astonished at his

treatment (17:6).

- e. Feeling hopeless, he expects to die (17:10).

G. Bildad's second speech and Job's anguished reply (18:1 - 19:29).

1. Bildad lashes Job for his stubbornness (18:1-21).

- a. He calls Job a fool (18:1).
- b. He warns that the wicked cannot escape punishment (18:5).

2. Job's sorrowful reply (19:1-29).

- a. He urges his friends to go away and leave him alone (19:1).
- b. He complains that God has blocked him on every side (19:7).
- c. He describes his terrible loneliness (19:13).
- d. Job voices his faith that he will be vindicated (19:23).
 - 1) He wants his words recorded for history (19:23).
 - 2) His faith revives (19:25).
 - 3) He warns his friends to beware how they treat him (19:28).

H. Zophar's second speech and Job's rebuttal (20:1 - 21:34).

1. Zophar's angry response to Job (20:1-29).

- a. He reminds Job that the wicked can expect swift punishment (20:1).
- b. He accuses Job of being a wicked oppressor (20:12).

- c. He warns Job that he cannot escape judgment (20:20).
- 2. Job summarizes and refutes all their arguments (21:1-34).
 - a. He speaks of the mysteries of God's providence (21:1).
 - b. He refutes their foolish arguments (21:17).
 - c. He affirms that God makes no mistakes in dealing with men (21:22).
 - d. Job urges his friends to inquire of others that his word may be confirmed (21:27).
 - e. He again affirms that all of them have misjudged his case (21:34).
- I. Eliphaz' third speech and Job's answer (22:1 - 24:25).
 - 1. He says that Job bores God with his words (22:1).
 - 2. He describes Job as wicked beyond words (22:5).
 - 3. Job declares his faith in God and himself (23:10).
 - 4. The dealings of God bewilder and terrify him (23:13).
 - 5. He asks why God does not have set sessions of judgment to deal with the world's inequities? (24:1).
 - 6. He charges that their philosophy does not answer the question of the inequities of life (24:18).

7. He states that God's justice confuses him (24:21).
8. He dares them to disprove his conclusions (24:25).
- J. Bildad's third speech and Job's response (25:1 - 25:12).
 1. Bildad offers no arguments, only protest (25:1-6).
 2. Job answers Bildad (26:1 - 27:12).
 - a. He sarcastically rebukes the friend (26:1).
 - b. He glorifies God's wisdom and power (26:5).
 - c. Job swears never to sacrifice his integrity (27:1).
 - d. He affirms his faith and questions theirs (27:8).
- K. Zophar's final speech and Job's summation (27:13 - 28:28).
 1. Although the author is not identified, it is thought by many to be Zophar. Compare 27:13 with 20:29 (27:13-23). Chapter 27 brings to an end the attempts of the three friends to convict Job of sin.
 2. Job's summation in praise of wisdom (28:1-28).
 - a. He describes man's search for treasures in the earth (28:1).
 - b. He then describes man's search for wisdom (28:12).
 - c. He affirms that only in God is wisdom

to be found (28:23).

- L. Job's concluding speech (29:1 - 31:40).
 - 1. He recalls the good days when God was with him (29:1-25).
 - 2. He describes his present pitiful condition (30:1-31).
 - a. Even the dregs of society hold him in contempt (30:1).
 - b. Rather than being honored, he is insulted (30:9).
 - c. He feels that even God is his antagonist (30:16).
 - d. He pleads with God to help him understand (30:24).
 - 3. Job reaffirms the integrity of his life (31:1-40).
- M. Elihu's lengthy speech to Job and his friends (32:1 - 37:24).
 - 1. Elihu's introduction and apology (32:1-22).
 - a. Prologue to Elihu's speech (32:1-5).
 - b. Elihu requests a hearing (32:6). He claims inspiration (32:8).
 - c. He reproves the three friends for failing to convict Job (32:11). Even so he repeats much of Eliphaz' and Bil-dad's arguments.
 - d. He says that he cannot contain himself, he must speak out (32:15).
 - 2. The main body of Elihu's message (33:1-33).

- a. He urges Job to accept his words as the will of God (33:1).
 - b. He charges Job with irreverence (33:8).
 - c. He argues that God does speak to men in various ways (33:13).
 - 1) He sometimes speaks in dreams and visions (33:14).
 - 2) He speaks through afflictions (33:19).
 - 3) He speaks by messengers such as Elihu (33:23).
 - d. He assures Job that he can be cured if he will repent (33:25).
 - e. He urges Job to heed his advice (33:29).
3. Elihu summarizes and responds to Job's complaints (34:1 - 35:16).
- a. He reminds the three friends of Job's claim to innocence (34:1).
 - b. He replies to Job's complaint that God was unjust in afflicting him so (34:10).
 - c. Since God is omniscient, his justice is fair (34:21).
 - d. He argues that Job has no right to complain about the way God is treating him (35:1).
 - e. He rebukes Job for demanding that God answer his prayer of complaint (35:9).

4. He praises God's greatness and urges Job to submit (36:1 - 37:24).
 - a. He affirms that God is both mighty and just (36:1).
 - b. He tells Job that his impatience is sinful (36:17).
 - c. He eulogizes God's greatness as seen in nature (36:24).
 - 1) A loud clap of thunder from the rising storm frightens Elihu (37:1).
 - 2) God's power is seen in the storms of winter (37:6).
 - d. In view of God's great power, he urges Job to give up and repent (37:14).

IV. *Controversy Between Jehovah and Job (38:1 - 42:6).*

- A. Jehovah responds to Job with a series of questions (38:1 - 41:34).

Note: That God does not reply to Job or his friends; he does not explain the problem of suffering nor does he attempt to vindicate his actions. Rather, he reveals his majesty and sovereign power. This satisfied Job's mind.

1. God calls Job to stand before him and give an account of himself (38:1).
2. He asks Job numerous questions about the material creation (38:4). If Job does not know the answers to such common matters, why should he expect to fully understand the profound issues of the moral government of God?

3. He asks Job further questions about the animal world (38:39 - 39:30). To none of these questions could Job give an answer.
4. Job declines to respond to God (40:1).
 - a. Job here realizes that he has said too much, yet he does not repent until later (40:4-5).
 - b. God lays before Job his sin: “Wilt thou even annul my judgment? Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be justified?”
5. God offers Job the moral reigns of the world (40:10).
 - a. He then notes that if man cannot control the hippopotamus, how can he rule the moral universe? (40:15).
 - b. Nor can man rule the crocodile; how then can he tell God how to run his world? (41:1).
- B. Job repents (42:1).
 1. He recognizes God’s absolute power (42:2).
 2. He recognizes his weakness and ignorance (42:3).
 3. Seeing God as never before, he repents (42:5-6).

V. *How It All Ended (42:7-17).*

- A. The friends are rebuked by God, for their attack on Job (42:7-9). They are ordered to go to Job for sacrifice and absolution (42:7).
- B. Job’s reward for faithfulness (42:10-17).
 1. His friendships were restored (42:11).

2. His property and wealth were restored (42:12).
3. His family was restored (42:13).
4. His health was restored (42:16).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. God is creator and sovereign Lord over all men and creation. He does things as he pleases; he does not have to give account to man of what he does.
2. Faith accepts God's decisions and believes in his love, goodness and justice, trusting that God will work all things out for our ultimate good.
3. Like Job we will never know all the answers, but we can know the God who is in control.
4. It is a fact that the innocent do sometimes suffer, but it is not due to God's carelessness, unconcern or lack of divine justice.
5. Man is impatient to see all justice meted out now. God does not hurry to settle such matters since he has all eternity.
6. Like Job, we must learn to live, not trusting our own righteousness and integrity, but by humble, trusting faith in God.
7. Human wisdom was totally unable to solve the grave problem of suffering. It still is.
8. We must beware of the very common failure of Elihu; daring to try to speak for

- God, without a true revelation from God.
9. No matter how sorely Satan may try us, remember he can do only what God allows.
 10. Remember when faith is tried, God is “betting on our faithfulness.” Satan is “betting against us.”
 11. God in his wisdom sees fit to let faith be tried by fire.
 12. Sometimes Satan’s most powerful tempters can be those relatives and friends we love and trust.
 13. If Job could survive and triumph over Satan, how much more are we able to with (a) Job’s example, (b) Jesus as Lord, (c) the Holy Spirit, (d) the new revelation of God which tells us a hundredfold more about God and his workings.
 14. God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek. 18:32), and he wants all to come to repentance (II Pet. 3:9), so he often allows the sinner to live on that he might repent and be saved.
 15. Suffering that drives us to seek after God is valuable.
 16. If we cannot understand the everyday things of God’s creation, how can we expect to understand the mind and decisions of the Creator?
 17. Like the friends, one can have a great deal of truth and yet a little error will spoil the whole system.

18. We must be careful never to become presumptuous about our righteousness.
19. Unlike Job, we need not ask, "If a man die shall he live again?" — We know we shall.
20. We need not wish for an "umpire" or mediator as Job did, we have Jesus (I Tim. 2:5).
21. More than Job could ever know, we know that our Redeemer lives and in the final day will vindicate his followers.
22. We must strive for the patience of Job (James 5:11).
23. God is not the author of suffering, misery or trouble, even though he may permit these and use them to test us.
24. All suffering and sorrow result from the sins of the race, not necessarily of the individual (Rom. 5:12).
25. Like Job, we will sin against God on some occasions and like Job, we must repent, confessing our sin.
26. Job, like a tree blown by a great wind, wrapped his roots about the Rock of Ages. So should we when life's storms blow upon us.
27. In Job, God demonstrates what his love in our hearts can help us endure.
28. The best of human beings may suffer every kind of sorrow and loss and still be faithful servants of God.
29. God can best test our faith when we are

- unaware of his presence, or even the test.
30. Outside a proper relationship to God, suffering will drive men either to despair or to some shallow religious solution. With proper faith, suffering will be faced with confidence that all is in God's hands and is being worked out for our good.
 31. All possessions are expendable; nothing is essential but our Lord.
 32. Most of our steps forward into deeper faith and freedom are taken as the result of extreme discomfort.

PSALMS — THE HYMNBOOK OF ISRAEL

Key Verse: 29:2, “Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory due unto his name; worship Jehovah in holy array.”

Key Thought: Worship.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. *Authors:*

- A. Contrary to popular opinion, David did not author all of the psalms.
- B. The following authors are named:
 - 1. Moses wrote Psalm 90.
 - 2. David is credited with 73 psalms.
 - 3. Solomon wrote Psalms 72 and 127.
 - 4. Asaph authored 12 psalms.
 - 5. Heman gave us Psalm 88.
 - 6. Ethan is credited with Psalm 89.
 - 7. Hezekiah wrote 10 psalms.
 - 8. The sons of Korah did 11 psalms.
 - 9. The remainder are anonymous. These are often described as orphan psalms.
- C. Our present edition of the Book of Psalms is a compilation done by some later *inspired* hand:
 - 1. One Jewish tradition ascribes the collecting of the psalms to Nehemiah.
 - 2. Another says it was Ezra.
 - 3. Still another would credit it to Hezekiah.

D. About David as lyric writer:

1. He was a skilled musician (I Sam. 16:16-18; II Sam. 6:5; I Chron. 16:4-6).
2. He was an inventor and maker of musical instruments (Amos 6:5).
3. He was an accomplished poet (II Sam. 1:19-27).
4. He was a man of deep feelings and rich imagination.
5. He was a true worshipper of Jehovah with genuine religious convictions.
6. His life's experiences were rich and varied.
7. He was filled with God's Spirit (I Sam. 16:13).
8. He was inspired of the Holy Spirit to write his psalms (II Sam. 23:1-2).

II. *About the Book:*

A. Date of composition:

1. From Moses, about 1450 B. C.
2. Most were completed by 500 B. C. in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah.
3. The psalms had their origin primarily in the age of David, Hezekiah and the return from Babylonian captivity.
4. In days past, liberal scholars sought to place a late date on all of the psalms, i.e., 500-150 B. C. Today such views have been discredited and repudiated by nearly all.
5. Some conservative scholars would date Psalms 44, 74 and 79 in the Maccabean period.

- B. Name:
 - 1. The Hebrew title is *Tehillim* which means Praise.
 - 2. Psalms is from the Septuagint.
 - 3. Early Christians referred to the book as the Psalter.
- C. State of the Hebrew text. "It may safely be maintained that the Hebrew text of the Psalter has come down to use in a rather good state of preservation." (Leupold).
- D. Numbering of the Psalms:
 - 1. In ancient Hebrew and Greek manuscripts, the number of Psalms vary as some are joined together as one, or longer ones are divided.
 - 2. Some manuscripts count 147, others 151.
 - 3. Psalms 1 and 2 are often joined as one, as are 9 and 10, and 114 and 115.
- E. Divisions of the book:
 - 1. The Hebrews divided the Psalms into five books.
 - 2. Each book ends with a doxology except the last. There the 150th psalm is the doxology to it and the whole collection.
 - 3. Characteristics of the five books:
 - a. Book I, Psalms 1-41. With four exceptions the psalms are attributed to David. The name Jehovah is most often applied to God.
 - b. Book II, Psalms 42-72, consists of psalms of Korah (42-47) and David

- (51-65, 68-70). Here the name Elohim is dominate.
- c. Book III, Psalms 73-89. Psalms of Asaph (73-83) and Korah (84-89). Psalm 86 is attributed to David. The names Jehovah and Elohim are equally employed.
 - d. Book IV, Psalms 90-106. Moses is credited with the first, David is assigned two (101, 103). The rest are anonymous. Jehovah is the prevailing divine name.
 - e. Book V, Psalms 107-150. Fifteen of these are attributed to David, one to Solomon. The rest are anonymous. Jehovah is the prominent name used.
- F. Type of Literature – Poetry:
- 1. Psalms is composed of 150 inspired poems set to music for Israel's worship.
 - 2. It is the world's most ancient collection of poems.
 - 3. The poetry of the Hebrews has been called "a poetry of friendship between God and man." (Herder).
 - 4. The Psalms are *lyric* poetry, that is adapted to music. There is a great variety in style of composition:
 - a. Some are *odes*, i.e., a dignified sort of song which narrates in a highly figurative way the facts of public or private history.

- b. Some are *ethical*, delivering solemn rules for life or religion in a simple manner.
 - c. Some are *elegiac*, sad compositions upon mournful subjects.
 - d. Some are *dramatic odes*, consisting of dialogues between the psalmist and others, i.e., friends, priests, enemies, or God.
 - e. Some are *enigmatic*, delivering doctrines of religion in obscure symbols designed to strike the imagination forcefully, thus bringing about understanding.
5. The Psalms (Hebrew poetry) contrasted with the poetry of ancient Greece:
- a. Greece's "subjects were either a fabulous theology, a false and ridiculous religion, chemirical wars, absurd heroism, impure love, agriculture, national sports, or hymns in honor of gods more corrupt than the most profligate of men. Their writings served only to render vice admirable, to honour superstition, to favour the most dangerous and degrading passions of men, such as impure love, ambition, pride and impiety." The same is true of Latin poets. (Adam Clarke).
6. In 1753 Bishop Lowth of England, an Oxford scholar and professor, discovered

the fundamentals of Hebrew poetry and their use of parallelism.

G. Style of Poetry – Parallelism:

1. Hebrew poetry is not governed by a sense of rhyme. There is no attempt to arrange every psalm into carefully measured stanzas though a psalm is sometimes divided by recurring refrains.
2. Their poetry has meter, but it is primarily a rhythm of sense. This is called parallelism.
3. In parallelism the lines are so arranged that the thought is expressed in different ways by repetition, amplification, contrast, or response.
4. Various types of parallelism:
 - a. *Synonymous* parallelism where the second line echoes or expands the first line with the same thought in different words.
 - b. *Synthetic* or constructive parallelism, where the second line adds a supplement or variation in thought to the first.
 - c. *Analytical* parallelism, where the second line states a consequence of the first line.
 - d. *Antithetic* parallelism in which the second line is in contrast to the first.
 - e. *Tautological* parallelism where almost identical words are used in both lines.

- f. *Cumulative* parallelism where the thought grows in intensity through repetition to a grand climax.
- H. Guidelines for interpreting Psalms:
 - 1. Always seek to determine the historical background of the psalm and become familiar with it.
 - 2. Remember that the Psalms are poetic in nature. Take into consideration the author's use of allegory, metaphor, personification and hyperbole. These must not be understood literally.
 - 3. When reading, compare the parallel lines for clarification.
 - 4. Notice the different types of psalms: meditation, prayers, praises, prophecies, and instruction.
 - 5. Recognize that many psalms have a dual meaning applying first to the author and his personal circumstance and then prophetically to the Messiah and his kingdom.
 - 6. Psalms must be interpreted in the light of the meaning of that day and culture. Do not attribute to them of old a knowledge and insight which they did not possess.
 - 7. Read the Psalms devotionally and practically not only to learn the meaning but to apply the lesson to your life.
- I. Miscellaneous facts about Psalms:
 - 1. Psalms is not arranged in chronological order.

2. The Psalter was the first portion of the Hebrew Bible to be produced on the printing press.
3. The Psalms are unlike all other scriptures in that in the others God is speaking to man, in the Psalms man is speaking to God.
4. The Hebrew scriptures (and Psalms) were divided into chapters and verses in 1445.
5. Psalm 119 is considered by many to be the greatest psalm of all.
6. In the fifth century the Patriarch of Constantinople refused to ordain ministers who could not repeat the psalms by heart.

III. *Classifications of Different Types of Psalms:*

- A. Psalms may be classified by their use of the divine names:
 1. Book I uses Jehovah 272 times while Elohim is used but 15 times.
 2. Book II uses Elohim 164 times and Jehovah only 30.
 3. Book III uses Jehovah 44 times and Elohim 43 times.
 4. Book IV uses Jehovah alone, 103 times.
 5. Book V uses Jehovah 236 times and Elohim only once in reference to the living God.
- B. Another grouping is:
 1. National psalms which speak of the nation's joys, sorrows, triumphs and tragedies.
 2. Nature psalms which declare God's glory as seen in nature.
 3. Royal or Messianic psalms which sing the

praises of Israel's coming Messiah.

4. Penitential psalms in which the writer confesses his sins and asks God's forgiveness.
5. Imprecatory psalms in which the author calls upon God to punish his enemies.
6. Alphabetic or acrostic psalms where the author so arranges his lines that each begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet (see Psalms 9, 10, 25, 119).
7. Miscellaneous psalms.

C. Yet another classification is:

1. Instruction (Psalms 1, 19, 39).
2. Praise (Psalms 8, 29, 93, 100).
3. Thanksgiving (Psalms 30, 65, 103, 107, 116).
4. Penitence (Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143).
5. Trust (Psalms 3, 27, 31, 46, 56, 62, 86).
6. Distress (Psalms 4, 13, 55, 64, 88).
7. Aspiration (Psalms 42, 63, 80, 84, 137).
8. History (Psalms 78, 105, 106).
9. Messianic prophecy (Psalms 2, 16, 22, 24, 40, 45, 68, 69, 72, 97, 110, 118).

IV. *The Headings or Inscriptions of the Psalms:*

A. Value:

1. The headings of the psalms are very old (pre-dating the Septuagint), but they do not belong to the inspired text.
2. The inscriptions cannot always be relied on. Some are genuine and represent ancient traditions. Their value must be

weighed and tested by the usual critical processes and the contents of the psalm.

B. The inscriptions are of three kinds:

1. Those which mark their musical or liturgical character.
2. Those which assign them to particular authors.
3. Those which designate the particular circumstances under which a psalm was composed.

C. Inscriptions explained:

1. *Aijeleth hash-Shahar* (Psalm 22), “the hind of the morning.” An Eastern expression for dawn. Likely the name of a well-known tune to which the psalm was sung.
2. *Alamoth* (Psalm 46), “maidens.” To be sung by female voices.
3. *Al-tashheth* (Psalm 57), “destroy not.” Thought to be the first words of a vintage song to which this psalm was sung.
4. *Gittith* (Psalm 8), from the name Gath which means “wine press.” It refers either to an instrument made in Gath or a vintage tune.
5. *Jonath elem rehokim* (Psalm 46), “The dove of the distant terebinths.” The name of a tune to sing it by.
6. *Leannoth* (Psalm 88), “for singing.”
7. *Mahalath* (Psalm 53), uncertain, perhaps “dancings” or “sickness,” likely the name of the tune.

8. *Muth-Labben* (Psalm 9), “the death of a son,” probably a tune.
9. *Neginoth* (Psalm 6), “stringed instruments” accompaniment.
10. *Nehiloth* (Psalm 5), “wind instruments” accompaniment.
11. *Selah* used 71 times. Probably a pause in the vocal part during an instrumental interlude.
12. *Sheminith* (Psalm 12), “the eights.” Seems to denote the male voices, perhaps an eight-stringed instrument.
13. *Shiggaion* (Psalm 7), likely an excited wandering rhythm.
14. *Shoshannim* (Psalm 69), “lilies,” instructions for singing the song.
15. *Song of Loves* (Psalm 45), a title to a marriage song.
16. *Song of Ascents* (Psalms 120-134), songs sung by pilgrims on their way to the great festivals at Jerusalem.
17. *For the Chief Musician*. Fifty-five psalms are dedicated to the choir leader of the temple.
18. *Dedication of the House* (Psalm 30), for the celebration when the ark was brought to Jerusalem.
19. *Higgaion* (Psalm 9:16), a musical note used with *Selah*.
20. *Jeduthun* (Psalm 39). A choir leader in David’s day. Likely this refers to a mode

of singing adopted by his choir.

21. *Maschil* (Psalm 32), probably means meditation or instruction.

22. *Michtam* (Psalm 16), uncertain, some think it means “golden.”

V. *Additional Psalms Found in the Old Testament:*

A. The victory song of Moses when they crossed the Red Sea (Exodus 15:1-18).

B. Moses' Farewell Song (Deut. 32:1-43).

C. The song of Deborah when God rescued Israel from the Canaanites (Judges 5:1-31).

D. The Song of Hannah when God gave her Samuel (I Sam. 2:1-10).

E. David's lamentation for Saul and Jonathan (II Sam. 1:19-27).

F. David's song of deliverance (II Sam. 22:2-51).

G. David's last song (II Sam. 23:1-7).

H. Isaiah's song of the coming restoration from captivity (Isa. 12:1-6).

I. Hezekiah's song of thanksgiving when he was spared from death (Isa. 38:9-20).

J. Jonah's prayer from the belly of the fish (Jonah 2:1-9).

K. Habakkuk's hymn of praise (Hab. 3:1-19).

L. Jeremiah's lamentation.

VI. *Theology of the Psalms:*

A. We read the Old Testament now with our Christian illumination. We must remember, however, that the ancient Hebrews did not so read it.

B. God chose to reveal the great doctrines of the faith to mankind in successive stages, beginning

with the simple promises to Adam and Eve in Eden. This is called progressive revelation:

1. Progressive revelation is a progression from the partial and obscure to the complete and clear.
 2. Never should it be considered as progress from truth to error.
- C. The concept of a resurrection and future life in Psalms: In Psalms it is a hope of that which *may* be, rather than a conviction of what *shall* be. In Isaiah the hope grows clearer. Ezekiel in his vision of the dry bones conceives of a resurrection. Daniel asserts a resurrection in language that cannot be misunderstood. From his time on it is a matter of undoubted Jewish faith. In his resurrection Christ brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (II Tim. 1:10).

VII. *Problem Areas in the Study of Psalms:*

- A. Some psalms are difficult to understand because we have no definite knowledge of their historical background.
- B. The bitter imprecations of some psalms have been a stumbling block to many students:
 1. "If we believe that the imprecatory passages are divine, that they belong to Him in whose hands are life and death, the load is lifted off and laid upon One who is strong enough to bear the burden of reproach" (Joseph Angus).
 2. ". . . we are justified in saying that the

imprecations in the Psalms, though springing from a righteous zeal for the glory of God, and not for any mere thirst of personal revenge, still are not such as a Christian can lawfully, in the natural sense, use now” (J. S. Perowne).

VIII. *Value of the Psalms:*

- A. If you ask, what will I expect to find in the Psalms?, the answer is everything found elsewhere in the Old Testament.
- B. “The Psalms are the epitome of the Bible, adapted to the purpose of devotion” (George Herne):
 - 1. They are models of acceptable devotion.
 - 2. They furnish God’s people with a guide for emotional attitudes in facing the problems of life.
 - 3. They provide additional insights into many of the historical narratives of the Old Testament.
 - 4. They provide a penetrating insight into the nature of man.
 - 5. Every great doctrine of the Bible is in some way dealt with in Psalms.
 - 6. Every characteristic and attribute of God is found therein.
- C. “The psalms of David will always be a mine of comfort to the needy and distressed, and a wellspring of hope for the downcast” (S. C. Yoder).
- D. No book of the scriptures, excepting the

gospels, has taken such a hold on the heart of Christendom.

- E. Ambrose of Milan wrote, "Psalms are a kind of medicine for the salvation of man." "It is the benediction of the people, the praise of God, the thanksgiving of the multitude . . . the voice of the church, the harmonious confession of our faith."
- F. The English martyr Hooker wrote, "Let there be any grief or disease incident unto the soul of man, any wound or sickness named for which there is not in this treasure-house a present comfortable remedy at all times ready to be found."
- G. Probably no other book has so influenced the turning points in men's lives, given expression to their deepest experiences, and woven itself into the very fibre of their character than the Psalms.
- H. The Lord himself died with the words of Psalm 22 on his lips.
- I. Psalms is one of the most important Old Testament books because it reveals to us the religion of Israel in terms of the individual saint's experience.
- J. They beautifully portray the prophetic history of our Lord.

IX. *Psalms and the New Testament:*

- A. The New Testament writers quote from Psalms more than any other Old Testament book. There are 93 such quotes with additional

allusions.

- B. Of all Old Testament citations in the New Testament which have Messianic content, nearly half are from the Psalms.

X. *The Use of Psalms in Christian Worship:*

- A. The Psalter was the hymnal of the ancient Hebrew temple, synagogue and early church.
- B. Psalms were sung antiphonally in the early church:

1. At times the congregation sang the verses of the Psalms alternately in two choirs, one answering the other.
2. Sometimes the first half of the verse was sung by a single voice, and the other half by the entire congregation.

- C. Psalms are hymns of worship:

1. Thanksgiving is the very life of the psalms.
2. Every psalm is a direct expression of the soul's consciousness of God.
3. Other scriptures have God speaking to man; in the psalms men are speaking to God.
4. "Here we can look into the hearts of all the saints" (M. Luther).

- D. Psalms have inspired some of the most noble hymns of the English language.

XI. *What Great Men Have Said About Psalms:*

- A. Luther called them "an epitome of the Bible."
- B. John Milton: "They may be easily made to appear over all the kinds of lyric poetry incomparable."

- C. Sir D. K. Sanford: "The poetry of the ancient Scriptures is the most superb that ever burnt within the breast of man."
- D. Roland Prothero: "The Book of Psalms contains the whole music of the heart of man, swept by the hand of his Maker."
- E. "The Psalms are a mirror in which each man sees the motions of his own soul."

XII. *Recommended Tools for Study of the Psalms:*

- A. *Exploring the Old Testament* by W. T. Perkiser, for a general introduction to the book.
- B. *Clarke's Commentary* by Adam Clarke for an outline study of each psalm.
- C. *The Book of Psalms* by J. J. Stewart Perowne for an introduction to each psalm.
- D. *The Treasury of David* by C. H. Spurgeon for homiletic treatment and practical lessons on each psalm.

XIII. *Simple Outline:*

- A. Book I which deals primarily with man, his origin, his blessed state, fall and recovery (Psalms 1 - 41).
- B. Book II which speaks of Israel's ruin, redemption and redeemer (Psalms 42 - 72).
- C. Book III which speaks of God's sanctuary and its importance to men (Psalms 73 - 89).
- D. Book IV which speaks of the earth which needs God's blessing (Psalms 90 - 106).
- E. Book V which praises the word of God (Psalms 107 - 150). Notice that each section ends with an amen or hallelujah (praise ye Jehovah)

except for the last section. It concludes with the 150th Psalm which itself is a doxology for its section and the whole book.

OUTLINE OF PSALMS:

BOOK I: A collection of psalms primarily by David; makes special use of the name Jehovah.

PSALM 1 – Who is the Happy Man?

Author: Unknown.

Ethical.

Background: Unknown.

I. *The Happy Man Described (1:1-3):*

A. Negatively.

B. Positively.

II. *The Perils of Wickedness (1:4-5).*

III. *Conclusion (1:6).*

PSALM 2 – Messiah's Reign and His Enemies.

Author: David (Acts 4:25).

Messianic.

Background: For application see Acts 4:23-31.

I. *The Heathen's Rage Against the Messiah (2:1-3).*

II. *The Response of Almighty God (2:4-6).*

III. *Messiah Recites His Divine Commission (2:7-9).*

IV. *The Psalmist Admonishes the Rebellious Rulers (2:10-12).*

PSALM 3 – His Unshaken Trust in God in the Face of Hostile Opposition.

Author: David.

A devotional meditation for morning.

Background: Absalom's rebellion (II Sam. 15-18).

- I. *His Complaint (3:1-2).*
- II. *His Confidence in Jehovah (3:3-4).*
- III. *His Safety Under God's Care (3:5-6).*
- IV. *His Prayer for Salvation (3:7-8).*

PSALM 4 – A Song of Trust in God's Providence.

Author: David.

A devotional meditation for evening.

Background: Perhaps Absalom's rebellion as above.

- I. *He Requests an Audience With God (4:1).*
- II. *He Rebukes His Enemies (4:2-5).*
- III. *He Expresses His Confidence in the Lord (4:6-8).*

PSALM 5 – A Prayer for Protection Against His Enemies.

Author: David.

Devotional petition.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *His Petition to be Heard (5:1-7).*
 - A. God's attitude toward the wicked (5:4).
 - B. His confidence in God (5:7).
- II. *His Request for Guidance (5:8).*
- III. *His Enemies Described (5:9).*
- IV. *His Imprecation (5:10).*
- V. *His Prayer for God's People (5:11-12).*

PSALM 6 – A Cry for Mercy in Time of Sickness.

Author: David.

Penitential Psalm.

Background: A time of serious illness and suffering.

- I. *His Anguished Cry For Relief (6:1-3).*
- II. *An Earnest Plea for Deliverance From Death (6:4-7).*
- III. *His Confidence in God's Favorable Response (6:8-10).*

PSALM 7 – A Prayer for Protection by God Against His Enemies.

Author: David.

Petition.

Background: Perhaps when persecuted by Saul (I Sam. 21-26). Sung by the Hebrews at the Feast of Purim.

- I. *His Confident Request (7:1-2).*
- II. *He Protests His Innocence (7:3-5).*
- III. *A Plea for Vindication by God (7:6-10).*
- IV. *God and Sinners Contrasted (7:11-16).*
- V. *His Thanksgiving (7:17).*

PSALM 8 – Praise to God for His Goodness to Man.

Author: David.

Psalm of praise.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *His Praise to God (8:1-2).*
- II. *His Question, Why Has God so Honored Man? (8:3-5).*
- III. *His Contemplation of What God has Done for Man (8:6-8).*
- IV. *His Concluding Praise (8:9).*

PSALM 9 – A Thanksgiving Psalm for God's Justice.

Author: David.

Thanksgiving hymn.

Acrostic in pattern, with the first letters of each line beginning with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. In this psalm two lines are assigned to each letter.

Background: Upon the defeat of some unknown heathen enemy.

- I. *His Unreserved Thanksgiving to God (9:1a).*
- II. *His Testimony of God's Works (9:1b).*
- III. *His Praise to God (9:2).*
- IV. *He Praises God's Righteous Judgments (9:3-8).*
- V. *He Praises God for Complete Security (9:9-11).*
- VI. *God's Vengeance on the Wicked is Complete (9:12-17).*
- VII. *He Calls Upon God to Vindicate the Righteous and Judge the Wicked (9:18-20).*

PSALM 10 — A Prayer for the Overthrow of the Wicked.

Author: Unknown.

Imprecation.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *He Complains That God Has Forgotten Him (10:1).*
- II. *He Describes His Enemies (10:2-11).*
- III. *He Prays for Deliverance (10:12-18).*

PSALM 11 — Trust in Jehovah as a Refuge and Defense.

Author: David.

A psalm of praise.

Background: Probably when persecuted by Saul or Absalom. In the form of a dialog.

- I. *The Timid Counsels of the Fearful Advisors (11:1-3).*
- II. *David's Reply of Faith (11:4-7).*

PSALM 12 – A Request for Divine Help Against the Unrighteous.

Author: David.

A petition.

Background: This depicts a time of national moral and ethical collapse in Israel.

- I. *His Prayer for Deliverance (12:1-2).*
- II. *His Prediction That God Will Punish the Arrogant (12:3-4).*
- III. *God's Promise to Respond (12:5-6).*
- IV. *His Affirmation of Faith (12:7-8).*

PSALM 13 – An Urgent Plea For Help in Affliction.

Author: David.

A petition.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *His Sigh of Anxiety (13:1-2).*
- II. *His Earnest Petition for Divine Help (13:3-4).*
- III. *His Song of Faith and Hope (13:5-6).*

PSALM 14 – On the Universal Foolishness and Wickedness of Men.

Author: David.

A Jehovahistic psalm. Psalm 53 is parallel to 14 but uses Elohim.

Background: During a time of national oppression (14:7).

- I. *The Unbeliever Described (14:1-3).*
- II. *His Confidence in God's Judgment (14:4-6).*
- III. *His Prayer for Deliverance (14:7).*

PSALM 15 – The Terms of Friendship With God.

Author: David.

An ethical psalm.

Background: Psalm 24 probes the same question.

- I. *His Question, Who Can Dwell With God? (15:1).*
- II. *God's Reply (15:2-5a).*
- III. *The Security of the Righteous (15:5b).*

PSALM 16 – Jehovah, the Author's Portion in Life and Savior From Death.

Author: David.

Messianic, 16:8-11 is applied by Peter to Christ's resurrection (Acts 2:25ff).

Background: Unknown.

- I. *His Prayer of Faith (16:1).*
- II. *His Affirmation of Trust in God (16:2-5).*
- III. *The Blessings of Serving God (16:6-7).*
- IV. *His Confidence in God's Protection (16:8-10).*

PSALM 17 – Encompassed by Enemies, David Prays for Help.

Author: David.

Petition.

Background: Uncertain.

- I. *His Prayer of Confidence, Based on His Righteousness (17:1-5).*
- II. *His Petition to be Preserved Even in a Wicked World (17:6-12).*
- III. *The Spirit of the World and the Spirit of God Contrasted (17:13-14).*
- IV. *Conclusion: His Affirmation of Faith (17:15).*

PSALM 18 – Jehovah Praised for a Victory.

Author: David.

Hymn of praise and thanksgiving.

Background: Written when God delivered him from the hand of Saul (II Sam. 22:1). The psalm is repeated in II Sam. 22:2-51 with slight modifications.

- I. *What God Meant to David (18:1-3).*
- II. *Dangers He Had Faced With God (18:4-19).*
- III. *The Divine Principle of Blessing (18:20-28).*
- IV. *His Glorious Victories Recounted (18:29-45).*
- V. *His Thanksgiving to God (18:46-50).*

PSALM 19 – Jehovah's Work and Word Praised.

Author: David.

An instruction.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *The Glory of God Seen in Creation (19:1-6).*
- II. *The Glory of God Seen in His Word (19:7-11).*
- III. *His Prayer for Forgiveness and Acceptance (19:12-14).*

PSALM 20 – A Prayer for Victory for the King.

Author: David.

An intercessory prayer-song.

Background: Sung by the people for their ruler when he was preparing to enter battle. It is closely related to Psalm 21. This one is intercessory, that is, one is a thanksgiving.

- I. *The Congregation's Prayer-Song for Their King (20:1-5).*

- II. *The Worship Leader Responds With Confidence (20:6).*
- III. *The Congregation Affirms Its Faith in Jehovah for Victory (20:7-8).*
- IV. *Conclusion: Save Us Jehovah (20:9).*

PSALM 21 – Thanksgiving for Deliverance and Victory.

Author: David.

Thanksgiving.

Background: Written to celebrate the king's victory in war. A sequel to Psalm 20.

- I. *The Congregation Praises God for the Victory (21:1-7).*
- II. *Their Words of Encouragement to the King (21:8-12).*
- III. *Conclusion: Praise to Jehovah (21:13).*

PSALM 22 – A Psalm Predicting the Anguish of Calvary.

Author: David.

Messianic. It gives a vivid picture of the crucifixion.

Background: A summary of David's persecutions and sufferings.

- I. *The Complaint of the Sufferer (22:1-8).*
- II. *His Petition of Confidence (22:9-11).*
- III. *His Suffering at the Hands of His Enemies (22:12-21):*
 - A. His enemies described (22:12-13).
 - B. His personal suffering (22:14-18). This depicts in detail Christ's crucifixion.
 - C. His last desperate plea for help (22:19-21).
- IV. *His Thanksgiving for Deliverance (22:22-25).*

- V. *He Predicts That All Men Will Share in the Lord's Blessings (22:26-31).*

PSALM 23 – Jehovah, David's Shepherd.

Author: David.

A devotional meditation. The best loved of all the psalms.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *Jehovah is His Shepherd (23:1-4).*
 - A. He provides every need (23:2-3).
 - B. He protects his sheep (23:4).
- II. *Jehovah's Blessings are Overflowing (23:5-6).*

PSALM 24 – A Psalm Celebrating the Bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem.

Author: David.

A hymn of celebration and rejoicing.

Background: When David brought the Ark of God into Jerusalem (see I Chron. 15-16; II Sam. 6: 12-23).

- I. *Jehovah's Universal Reign (24:1-2).*
- II. *Qualifications of Those Who Would Come Before Jehovah (24:3-6).*
- III. *The Coming of Jehovah Into His City (24:7-10).*

PSALM 25 – A Prayer for Protection, Instruction and Forgiveness.

Author: David.

Alphabetic.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *A Prayer for Protection (25:1-3).*

- II. *A Request for Guidance (25:4-5).*
- III. *A Plea for Pardon (25:6-7).*
- IV. *His Confidence in Jehovah (28:8-11).*
- V. *The Blessings of the Man Who Fears God (25:12-14).*
- VI. *His Prayer of Faith (25:15-21).*
- VII. *His Prayer For All of God's People (25:22).*

PSALM 26 – A Prayer of a Righteous Man for Protection.

Author: David.

A petition.

Background: It seems to reflect a situation in which the author had endured some unjust suffering or sorrow.

- I. *His Appeal to God for Justice (26:1-7).*
- II. *His Love for God's House Related (26:8).*
- III. *His Petition for Deliverance From Evil Men (26:9-10).*
- IV. *His Resolve to Faithfully Serve God (26:11-12).*

PSALM 27 – A Psalm of Unswerving Trust in Jehovah.

Author: David.

Instruction and petition.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *His Declaration of Confidence in His God (27:1-6).*
 - A. He relates how God protects him (27:1-3).
 - B. He expresses his intense desire to worship at God's house (27:4-6).
- II. *His Fervent Plea (27:7-13).*
 - A. That God will hear his prayer (27:7-9).
 - B. His total trust in God's care (27:10-13).
- III. *His Admonition: Wait for Jehovah (27:14).*

PSALM 28 – A Plea For Help and Thanksgiving For Its Answer.

Author: David.

Imprecatory.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *His Petition to be Heard (28:1-2).*
- II. *His Imprecation on the Wicked (28:3-5).*
- III. *His Thanksgiving for Answer to His Prayer (28:6-7).*
- IV. *A Prayer for God's People (28:8-9).*

PSALM 29 – Praise to God For His Power as Seen in a Thunderstorm.

Author: David.

A hymn of adoration.

Background: Likely the author was motivated to write this upon witnessing a spectacular thunderstorm.

- I. *An Admonition to Give Praise to Jehovah (29:1-2).*
- II. *Reasons Why All Should Praise God (29:3-11).*
 - A. God's great power as seen in a thunderstorm (29:3-9).
 - B. God's grace toward his people (29:10-11).

PSALM 30 – Thanksgiving Upon Recovery From Illness.

Author: David.

A thanksgiving hymn.

Background: The author had been sick unto death, but God had heard his prayer and healed him. The Hebrews use this psalm in celebrating Chanukah which commemorates the rededication of the temple after the persecution of

Antiochus Epiphanes.

- I. *His Thanksgiving for Deliverance From His Near Fatal Illness (30:1-3).*
- II. *He Admonishes Others to Praise the Lord (30:4-5).*
- III. *His Past Mistake, False Security (30:6-10).*
- IV. *His Recovery and Thanks For It (30:11-12).*

PSALM 31 – A Prayer of Praise and Petition.

Author: David.

Petition for help.

Background: Perhaps written of Saul's persecution of David (I Sam. 23).

- I. *His Prayer for Deliverance (31:1-6).*
- II. *He Exults in God's Expected Deliverance (31:7-8).*
- III. *His Complaint at God's Delay in Responding (31:9-14).*
- IV. *His Request for Deliverance From His Enemies (31:15-18).*
- V. *He Praises God's Goodness (31:19-22).*
- VI. *His Recommendation: Love Jehovah (31:23-24).*

PSALM 32 – The Happiness of a Forgiven Sinner.

Author: David.

A didactic, penitential psalm.

Background: Written after David's forgiveness for his sin with Bathsheba (II Sam. 12:1-24). Psalm 51 should be read first.

- I. *The Happiness of the Forgiven Man (32:1-2).*
- II. *The Misery of the Sinner (32:3-4).*
- III. *The Pleasant Fruit of Confession (32:5-7).*
- IV. *He Urges Men to Willingly Obey God (32:8-11).*

PSALM 33 – Praise to the Lord, Creator and Preserver of All.

Author: Anonymous.

A psalm of praise and adoration.

Background: When the nation was delivered from heathen oppression.

- I. *A Call to Praise God (33:1-3).*
- II. *Praise God for His Word and Creation (33:4-9).*
- III. *Praise God Who Rules All Nations (33:10-17).*
- IV. *Praise God Who Protects and Provides for His People (33:18-22).*

PSALM 34 – A Hymn to Jehovah the Great Provider and Deliverer.

Author: David.

Alphabetic, Didactic.

Background: For a possible background see I Sam. 21:19-15, when he feined madness to escape the Philistines.

- I. *His Continual Hymn to God (34:1-10).*
 - A. He urges others to praise God with him (34:1-3).
 - B. He relates God's protection and deliverance (34:4-7).
 - C. He relates God's gracious provisions (34:8-10).
- II. *His Lesson of Instruction (34:11-22).*

PSALM 35 – A Petition for Help Against His Enemies.

Author: David.

An imprecation.

Background: This seems to have grown out of Saul's persecutions (I Sam. 24:1-17).

- I. *His Prayer for Divine Judgment on His Enemies (35: 1-10).*
- II. *His Complaint About His Enemies' Ingratitude (35: 11-18).*
- III. *His Confidence That God Will Vindicate Him (35: 19-27).*
- IV. *His Concluding Promise to Praise God Always (35:28).*

PSALM 36 – A Song Contrasting the Wickedness of Man With the Righteousness of God.

Author: David.

A didactic psalm.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *The Character of the Wicked Described (36:1-4).*
- II. *He Extolls God's Mercy (36:5-9).*
- III. *He Requests God's Continued Blessings (36:10-12).*

PSALM 37 – The Seeming Prosperity of the Wicked and the Real Prosperity of the Righteous.

Author: David.

An acrostic with each four lines being assigned a letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Background: He vindicates the righteous of God's providence.

- I. *He Urges Men to Avoid Murmuring and Trust Jehovah (37:1-8).*
 - A. The triumph of the wicked is short lived (37: 9-11).
 - B. The futility of wickedness (37:12-15).

- C. The advantages of righteousness over wickedness (37:16-22).
- D. The blessings of the righteous (37:23-28).
- E. Reasons why the righteous are blest (37:29-34).
- III. *His Recommendations to His Hearers* (37:35-40).

PSALM 38 – A Prayer of a Suffering Servant.

Author: David.

A penitential psalm.

Background: Relates to a time of physical illness and persecution.

- I. *His Prayer Concerning His Bodily and Mental Suffering* (38:1-8).
- II. *He Relates That Friends Had Deserted Him and Enemies Were Attacking* (38:9-14).
- III. *His Fervent Plea for Deliverance* (38:15-22).

PSALM 39 – A Song on the Vanity of Life.

Author: David.

A didactic psalm.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *A Resolution to Bridle His Tongue* (39:1-3).
- II. *He Prays for Divine Help in Understanding Life's Brevity* (39:4-5).
- III. *He Acknowledges God's Power to Chasten His Life* (39:6-11).
- IV. *His Plaintiff Cry for Help* (39:12-13).

PSALM 40 – He Praises God for a Great Deliverance and Prays for Further Help.

Author: David.

A Messianic psalm.

Background: Verses 13-17 are repeated in Psalm 70.

- I. *He Praises God for a Past Deliverance (40:1-3).*
- II. *He Praises God for His Wonderful Works (40:4-5).*
- III. *He Pledges His Faithful Obedience to God (40:6-10).* Compare Heb. 10:5-10 for Messianic application.
- IV. *His Prayer for Help and Deliverance (40:11-15).*
- V. *His Request for the Righteous (40:16-17).*

PSALM 41 – In Sickness He Complains of Enemies and False Friends.

Author: David.

Didactic.

Background: Thought to be related to Absalom's rebellion.

- I. *He Relates the Blessings of the Sympathetic (41:1-3).*
- II. *He Pleads For Aid in His Distress (41:4-12).*
- III. *His Final Benediction (41:13).*

Note: The "amen and amen" brings the first book of Psalms to a close.

BOOK II: A collection of psalms by the sons of Korah, David and others. It makes primary use of the name Elohim, and speaks of Israel's ruin, redemption and redeemer.

PSALM 42 – A Song of the Soul's Desire for God.

Author: Sons of Korah.

A devotional psalm.

Background: Psalms 42 and 43 may originally have been one; some ancient manuscripts have it thus. Both of these seem to relate to the Babylonian captivity.

- I. *He Reminisces About Past Joys of Worship (42:1-5).*
- II. *His Hope For Heavenly Help in Sorrow (42:6-11).*
Note the refrain in verses 5 and 11.

PSALM 43 – A Prayer for Deliverance.

Author: See notes on Psalm 42.

A devotional petition.

Background: The exiles in Babylonian captivity.

- I. *He Prays That God Would be His Advocate (43:1-3).*
- II. *His Promise to Worship God (43:4).*
- III. *His Refrain (43:5).*

PSALM 44 – A Cry of Despair When Their Army Had Suffered Defeat.

Author: Sons of Korah.

A devotional psalm of petition.

Background: From the experience of a national disaster when they had been defeated militarily.

- I. *He Remembers God's Providential Leadership of the Past (44:1-3).*
- II. *He Pleads With God for Renewed Help (44:4-8).*
- III. *He Complains That God Has Allowed the Enemy to Prevail (44:9-16).*

- IV. *He Insists on Israel's Faithfulness (44:17-22).*
- V. *He Repeats His Plea For Deliverance and Victory (44:23-26).*

PSALM 45 – A Song Celebrating the King's Marriage.

Author: Sons of Korah.

Messianic.

Background: This was first written to celebrate Solomon's wedding; typically it applies to Christ and the church.

- I. *The Preface (45:1).*
- II. *The Bride-Groom's Character and Reign Described (45:2-9).*
- III. *The Bride in Her Beauty is Exhorted to Leave Family and Friends and Come Unto Her Husband (45:10-17).*

PSALM 46 – A Hymn to God the Refuge of His People.

Author: Sons of Korah.

A song of celebration for a military victory God had given them.

Background: Following a great and perilous battle.

- I. *His Declaration of Faith in God (46:1-3).*
- II. *His Reflection on God's Protection of Zion (46:4-7).*
- III. *His Invitation to Men to View God's Judgment (46:8-11).*

PSALM 47 – A Call to Glorify God.

Author: Sons of Korah.

A psalm of praise and adoration.

Background: May have been written when the ark

was carried up to Jerusalem, or when God destroyed the Assyrians before Jerusalem. This psalm is sung in Jewish synagogues on New Year's Day.

- I. *A Call to Praise God (47:1-5).*
- II. *Reasons Why Men Should Praise God (47:6-9).*

PSALM 48 – A Psalm Celebrating the Beauty and Glory of Jerusalem.

Author: Sons of Korah.

A psalm of thanksgiving for national deliverance.

Background: When Jehovah delivered Jerusalem from the Assyrians (II Kings 18:19 - 19:37).

- I. *The Glory of the Holy City, Jerusalem (48:1-3).*
- II. *The Consternation of Her Foes (48:4-8).*
- III. *His Exhortation to Remember God's Blessings (48:9-14).*

PSALM 49 – The Foolishness of Trusting Riches.

Author: Sons of Korah.

A didactic psalm.

Background: Note the similarity of this psalm to Ecclesiastes.

- I. *His Invitation to Men to Listen (49:1-4).*
- II. *Wealth Cannot Avoid Death (49:5-12).*
- III. *The End of the Righteous Contrasted With The Wicked (49:13-15).*
- IV. *Man Cannot Carry His Wealth Beyond the Grave (49:16-20).*

PSALM 50 – A Hymn to God, the Judge of All Men.

Author: Asaph.

A song of instruction.

Background: The psalm depicts a courtroom scene with Jehovah as judge and all men as defendants.

- I. *The Heavenly Judge in His Awesome Glory (50:1-6).*
- II. *The Judge's Address to the Defendants (50:7-15).*
- III. *The Judge Indicts Wicked Teachers (50:16-21).*
- IV. *Concluding Statements to Both Saints and Sinners (50:22-23).*

PSALM 51 – A Fervent Prayer for Pardon by a Convicted Sinner.

Author: David.

A penitential psalm.

Background: Written by David after his rebuke by Nathan concerning his sin with Bathsheba (II Sam. 12:1-14). This and Psalm 32 compliment each other.

- I. *His Prayer for Forgiveness for His Shameful Deed (51:1-9).*
- II. *His Plea for Restoration and Renewal (51:10-12).*
- III. *His Pledge to Teach Others the Lessons He Had Learned (51:13-17).*
- IV. *The King's Prayer for His Nation (51:18-19).*

PSALM 52 – David's Song of Confidence That He Would Be Delivered From His Enemy.

Author: David.

An affirmation of faith in God's providence.

Background: When Doeg the Edomite sought to

ensnare David for King Saul (I Sam. 21:1-7; 22:9-23).

- I. *His Invective Against Doeg and Saul (52:1-5).*
- II. *The Satisfaction of the Righteous When They See The Wicked Fall (52:6-7).*
- III. *The Confidence of Those Who Follow Jehovah (52:8-9).*

PSALM 53 – On the Universal Sinfulness of Men.

Author: David.

A psalm of instruction.

Background: A revised edition of Psalm 14. Because of verse 6, some think it may have been written during the Babylonian captivity.

- I. *The Unbeliever Described (53:1-4).*
- II. *The Judgment of the Unbelievers (53:5).*
- III. *The Author's Prayer for Deliverance (53:6).*

PSALM 54 – David's Prayer in Ziph While Hiding From Saul.

Author: David.

An urgent petition for help.

Background: David had been betrayed by the Ziphites unto Saul who wished to kill him (I Sam. 23:19-29).

- I. *His Urgent Prayer for Help (54:1-3).*
- II. *His Confidence That God Would Help Him (54:4-5).*
- III. *His Gratitude is Promised (54:6-7).*

PSALM 55 – A Prayer for Divine Judgment on the Wicked.

Author: David.

An imprecatory psalm.

Background: When Absalom rebelled (II Sam. 16:20ff).

- I. *His Plight and Prayer for Deliverance (55:1-8).*
- II. *His Imprecation Upon His Enemies (55:9-15).* Verses 12-15 apply first to Ahithophel who was a traitor to David, but typically to Judas Iscariot.
- III. *His Faith Brings Confidence (55:16-21).*
- IV. *His Closing Exhortation and Meditation (55:22-23).*

PSALM 56 — David's Prayer for Deliverance From the Philistines.

Author: David.

A petition for help.

Background: When David was captured by the Philistines in Gath (I Sam. 21:11 - 22:1).

- I. *He Complains That Men Would Devour Him (56:1-2).*
- II. *He Expresses His Confidence in God (56:3-4).*
- III. *He Describes the Actions of His Enemies (56:5-6).*
- IV. *He Voices His Hope in God (56:7-9).*
- V. *He Sings His Thanks to God (56:10-13).*

PSALM 57 — David's Prayer While Hiding From Saul.

Author: David.

A petition for help.

Background: When David hid from Saul in the cave (I Sam. 24:1-12).

- I. *His Plea for Mercy (57:1).*
- II. *His Motivations for Imploring God (57:2-6).*
- III. *His Resolution to Give God the Praise (57:7-11).*

PSALM 58 – A Protest Against Wicked Judges.

Author: David.

An imprecation.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *The Accusation is Laid Against the Ungodly (58:1-5).*
- II. *God's Judgment is Sought (58:6-8).*
- III. *He Predicts the Judgment of the Wicked and the Reward of the Righteous (58:9-11).*

PSALM 59 – A Prayer That God Will Deliver Him From His Enemies.

Author: David.

A petition in a time of severe distress and an imprecation.

Background: When Saul dispatched troops to kill David (I Sam. 19:11-18).

- I. *His Plea for Deliverance (59:1-2).*
- II. *His Complaint About His Plight (59:3-8).*
- III. *He Foresees the End of the Wicked (59:9-10).*
- IV. *His Imprecation (59:11-15).*
- V. *His Thankful Praise (59:16-17).*

PSALM 60 – A Lamentation Over a Lost Battle and A Prayer for Help.

Author: David.

A lamentation and petition.

Background: Following a battle with Syria (II Sam. 8:3-14).

- I. *His Mournful Cry of Sorrow (60:1-3).*
- II. *His Gladsome Song of Victory (60:4-8).*

III. *He Petitions God for Renewed Help Against the Enemy (60:9-12).*

PSALM 61 – A Song of God’s Providential Protection.

Author: David.

A hymn of petition and praise.

Background: Seems to reflect David’s recovery from Absalom’s rebellion.

- I. *His Prayer for Protection (61:1-3).*
- II. *His Pledge to Serve God Always (61:4).*
- III. *His Confidence in God’s Providence (61:5-7).*
- IV. *His Concluding Vow (61:8).*

PSALM 62 – A Song Teaching Men to Seek Refuge in God.

Author: David.

A didactic psalm.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *His Confidence in God’s Deliverance (62:1-2).*
- II. *The Attack of His Enemies (62:3-4).*
- III. *He Reminds Himself to be Patient (62:5-9).*
- IV. *He Urges Men to Trust Not Money (62:10).*
- V. *The Power and Righteousness of God are His Confidence (62:11-12).*

PSALM 63 – A Psalm Praising God as the Soul’s Satisfaction.

Author: David.

A devotional psalm.

Background: When David was pursued by his enemy (either Saul or Absalom). This psalm was read daily by many early Christians when under

persecution.

- I. *His Ardent Desire for Worship (63:1-5).*
- II. *His Meditation on God's Past Help (63:6-8).*
- III. *His Prediction (63:9-11):*
 - A. Concerning his enemies, destruction (63:9-10).
 - B. Concerning himself, victory (63:11).

PSALM 64 – He Prays for Protection Against a Conspiracy.

Author: David.

A petition and instruction.

Background: Seems to relate to his stay at Ziph while hiding from Saul.

- I. *His Plea for Help in View of His Enemies (64:1-6).*
- II. *The Sure Judgment of God Upon His Enemies (64:7-10).*

PSALM 65 – A Hymn Praising God's Abundant Blessings on the Earth.

Author: David.

A song of thanksgiving.

Background: On the occasion of a bountiful harvest.

- I. *He Praises God for Answered Prayer (65:1-4).*
- II. *The Righteous Power of God Described (65:5-8).*
- III. *His Harvest Song (65:9-13).*

PSALM 66 – A Psalm of National Thanksgiving for Deliverance in Answer to Prayer.

Author: David.

A thanksgiving hymn.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *A Call to Worship God (66:1-4).*

- II. *He Reviews the History of God's Care of Israel (66:5-7).*
- III. *He Urges People to Bless God, Even in Distress (66:8-12).*
- IV. *He Pledges to Honor His Vows to God (66:13-15).*
- V. *His Message to His Fellows About God's Blessings (66:16-20).*

PSALM 67 — A Charge to All Men of All Nations to Praise God.

Author: Unknown.

A hymn of praise.

Background: Unknown. This psalm foresees the world-wide scope of the Christian age. It forms an ideal prayer for the church today.

- I. *A Missionary Prayer For All Nations (67:1-2).*
- II. *His Charge to All Nations to Glorify God (67:3-5).*
- III. *His Delight in God's Graciousness (67:6-7).*

PSALM 68 — A Triumphant Psalm of Praise and Jubilation.

Author: David.

A victory song praising God.

Background: Thought to celebrate the transporting of the ark of God into Jerusalem (II Sam. 6:12-19). Messianic thoughts are seen in 68:18.

- I. *The Response of Saints and Sinners Before Jehovah (68:1-3).*
- II. *The Call to Worship Jehovah (68:4).*
- III. *Qualities of God That Demand Our Worship (68:5-6).*

- IV. *His Recollection of Past Victories of God for Israel (68:7-14).*
- V. *Other Mountains Envy Zion Because of God's Presence (68:15-19).*
- VI. *God Will Protect and Deliver His People (68:20-23).*
- VII. *The Procession Bringing the Ark to the City (68:24-27).*
- VIII. *He Prays for National Strength Against Foreign Nations (68:28-31).*
- IX. *He Exhorts Men to Praise the Mighty God (68:32-34).*
- X. *His Benediction (68:35).*

PSALM 69 – A Lamentation of Distress and Imprecation Upon His Enemies.

Author: The uninspired scribal notes attribute it to David. Many think, however, that Jeremiah wrote it (compare Lam. 3:40-66).

A devotional petition.

Background: If Jeremiah is author, it was when he was cast into the dungeon (Jer. 38:1ff).

- I. *His Cry of Despair (69:1-12):*
 - A. His awful predicament (69:1-4).
 - B. His loyalty to God is the cause of his persecution (69:5-12).
- II. *His Urgent Prayer for Deliverance (69:13-21):*
 - A. His dependence on God confessed (69:13-18).
 - B. He pours out his heart to God (69:19-21).
- III. *His Imprecation Upon His Foe (69:22-28).*
- IV. *His Thanks to God for Salvation (69:29-36).*

PSALM 70 – An Urgent Plea for Speedy Help Against

Enemies.

Author: David.

A petition and an imprecation.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *A Prayer for Help Against His Enemies (70:1).*
- II. *An Imprecation Upon His Enemies (70:2-3).*
- III. *His Prayer for the Righteous (70:4).*
- IV. *The Reasons for His Request (70:5).*

PSALM 71 – Prayer of an Aged Saint.

Author: Unknown.

A devotional petition.

Background: Unknown. Some think 71 and 70 were originally one.

- I. *A Prayer for God's Favor and Help (71:1-4).*
- II. *His Testimony of Past Experiences (71:5-8).*
- III. *He Pleads for Help Against His Foes (71:9-13).*
- IV. *He Rejoices in His Hope (71:14-16).*
- V. *His Prayer for Help in Old Age (71:17-18).*
- VI. *His Confidence in God (71:19-21).*
- VII. *His Promise to God (71:22-24).*

PSALM 72 – A Prayer for the Reign of a Righteous King.

Author: According to the Masoretic notes, Solomon is the author. Many scholars think David wrote this psalm for Solomon.

Messianic.

Background: Seems to apply initially to Solomon and ultimately to Christ.

- I. *A Description of the King's Reign (72:1-7).*
- II. *His Will be a Universal Reign (72:8-11).*

- III. *It Will be a Beneficent Reign (72:12-14).*
- IV. *His Will be a Reign of Prosperity (72:15-17).*
- V. *His Doxology (72:18-20).*

BOOK III: These are Psalms of Asaph and others with balanced use of the names Jehovah and Elohim. They speak of God's sanctuary and its importance to men.

PSALM 73 – A Contemplation on the Prosperity of the Wicked.

Author: Asaph.

A psalm of instruction.

Background: Probes the question, who is the happy man, the godly or the wicked?

- I. *His Problem Stated (73:1-3).*
- II. *The Apparent Prosperity of the Wicked (73:4-9).*
- III. *The Arrogance of the Wicked (73:10-14).*
- IV. *His Contemplation (73:15-17).*
- V. *His Confidence in God's Justice (73:18-20).*
- VI. *His Shame (73:21-22).*
- VII. *His Resolution to Trust and Serve God (73:23-28).*

PSALM 74 – A Psalm of Mourning When Israel was Over-run by Enemies.

Author: Asaph.

A mournful petition.

Background: Seems to have been written at the time of the conquest and persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes in the Maccabean period, 170-165 B. C. (Notice 74:4-9).

- I. *His Pitiful Cry of Complaint (74:1-3).*
- II. *He Describes the Devastation of the Enemy (74:4-9).*
- III. *His Appeal for Help (74:10-11).*
- IV. *He Contemplates God's Past Help (74:12-17).*
- V. *His Prayer for Deliverance (74:18-23).*

PSALM 75 – On the Certain Triumph of the Righteous and Destruction of the Wicked.

Author: Asaph.

A hymn of instruction.

Background: This was possibly written at the time of Assyria's invasion in the days of Hezekiah.

- I. *He Praises God (75:1).*
- II. *God's Response From Heaven (75:2-6).*
- III. *He Reminds the Wicked of God's Judgment (75:7-8).*
- IV. *His Concluding Praise (75:9-10).*

PSALM 76 – Praising the Victorious Power of Jehovah.

Author: Asaph.

A victory song.

Background: Upon the defeat of the Assyrian army (II Kings 19:35ff).

- I. *Jehovah the God of the Hebrews (76:1-3).*
- II. *How God Destroyed the Enemy (76:4-6).*
- III. *He Praises God for Deliverance (76:7-9).*
- IV. *Conclusions to be Drawn From God's Actions (76:10-12).*

PSALM 77 – A Song of Lamentation and Consolation in Troublous Times.

Author: Asaph.

A lamentation and instruction.

Background: The author derives great comfort from contemplating God's past deliverances, during a time of hardship.

- I. *Trouble and Sorrows Recounted (77:1-9):*
 - A. His intention to seek God (77:1-3).
 - B. His heavy heart (77:4-6).
 - C. His searching questions (77:7-9).
- II. *He Tells How He Overcame His Sorrows (77:10-20):*
 - A. He meditated on God's past blessings (77:10-12).
 - B. He worshipped his God (77:13-15).
 - C. He read the scriptures (77:16-20).

PSALM 78 – A Historical Recollection of God's Dealings With an Ungrateful Nation.

Author: Asaph.

A historical psalm.

Background: Some think it was written during Solomon's reign to encourage people to be loyal to David's dynasty.

- I. *An Exhortation to Hear and Learn From History (78:1-8).*
- II. *Lessons From History Given (78:9-66):*
 - A. Ephraim, an example of unfaithfulness (78:9-11).
 - B. God's gracious dealings in the exodus (78:12-31).
 - C. Israel's sin and judgments in the wilderness (78:32-39).
 - D. Israel's rebellion in the wilderness (78:40-55).
 - E. Israel's sins in Canaan (78:56-66).
- III. *The Ascendency of David's Kingdom (78:67-72).*

PSALM 79 – A Funeral Dirge for Jerusalem.

Author: Asaph.

A lamentation and imprecation.

Background: Likely written at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.

- I. *The Situation Described (79:1-4).*
- II. *His Quiry (79:5).*
- III. *His Imprecation (79:6-12).*
- IV. *His Promise to Praise God (79:13).*

PSALM 80 – A Prayer for God's Deliverance as in the Exodus.

Author: Asaph.

A petition for deliverance.

Background: It seems to be a prayer for the nation as they faced a powerful enemy.

- I. *His Prayer for God's Blessing (80:1-3).*
- II. *A Description of Their Sorrows (80:4-7).*
- III. *His Parable Describing Israel's History (80:8-16).*
- IV. *His Closing Petition (80:17-19).*

PSALM 81 – He Praises God's Graciousness in Dealing With a Disobedient Nation.

Author: Asaph.

A psalm of thanksgiving.

Background: Seems to be a song for the Passover celebration. It reflects a time of oppression. The author sees Israel's waywardness as the cause of her troubles.

- I. *His Summons to Remember the Passover (81:1-5).*
- II. *God's Message to His People (81:6-12).*

III. *God's Conditional Promise (81:13-16).*

PSALM 82 – A Song Rebuking Unjust Judges.

Author: Asaph.

Didactic.

Background: Likely written when Jehoshaphat reformed the courts (II Chron. 19:4-7).

- I. *A Warning to Corrupt Judges (82:1-2).*
- II. *An Exhortation to Judge With Equity (82:3-5).*
- III. *Threatened Judgments on Dishonest Judges (82:6-7).*
- IV. *Conclusion (82:8).*

PSALM 83 – A Prayer That God Will Confound the Conspiracy of the Enemies.

Author: Asaph.

An imprecation.

Background: Perhaps written when King Jehoshaphat was attacked by a confederacy (II Chron. 20:1-30).

- I. *His Urgent Call For Help (83:1-5).*
- II. *He Names His Enemies (83:6-8).*
- III. *His Imprecation on Them (83:9-18).*

PSALM 84 – The Emotions of a Temple Servant About His Work.

Author: Sons of Korah.

Didactic.

Background: The Korahites were door-keepers and singers in the temple (II Chron. 20:19). The priests and Levites were divided into courses and rotated in the temple service (I Chron. 23:1-6).

- I. *His Love For God's House Expressed (84:1-3).*
- II. *The Blessings of Those Who Are Privileged to Serve (84:4-7).*
- III. *His Prayer of Praise (84:8-11).*
- IV. *The Blessings of a Trusting God (84:12).*

PSALM 85 – Thanksgiving for Return From Captivity and A Prayer for Restoration of National Strength.

Author: Sons of Korah.

A psalm of thanksgiving.

Background: When the Hebrews returned home after the Babylonian captivity (see Neh. 1:3).

- I. *He Acknowledges God's Former Mercies (85:1-3).*
- II. *His Petition for Present Help (85:4-7).*
- III. *God's Reply as Given Through the Priest (85:8-13).*

PSALM 86 – A Prayer for Mercy, a Pledge of Faithfulness.

Author: David.

A petition.

Background: Unknown. This psalm is a Mosaic of quotes from other scriptures. It is called the Adonai Psalm since it uses that name for God 7 times.

- I. *His Petition for Heavenly Assistance (86:1-5).*
- II. *His Pledge Based Upon His Confidence in God (86:6-13).*
- III. *His Final Request for Deliverance (86:14-17).*

PSALM 87 – The Privileges of Zion's Children.

Author: Sons of Korah.

Didactic.

Background: Some see Messianic strains in this psalm.

- I. *He Celebrates the Praises of Zion (87:1-3).*
- II. *He Sees the Future Day When All Nations Will Know Jehovah (87:4-7).*

PSALM 88 – A Pitiful Cry of One Near Death.

Author: Sons of Korah.

A devotional petition.

Background: It seems the author has suffered throughout life and is nigh unto death. The saddest of all the psalms.

- I. *His Petition to be Heard (88:1-2).*
- II. *His Misery is the Reason for His Prayer (88:3-9).*
- III. *His Questions of Despair (88:10-13).*
- IV. *His Great Loneliness (88:14-18).*

PSALM 89 – A Song About God's Covenant With David.

Author: Ethan the Ezrahite.

Petition.

Background: The author appealed to God to remember his covenant with David and save the nation from affliction (II Sam. 7:12-17). Psalm 89 is considered one of the greatest poetic pieces of Hebrew literature.

- I. *His Song of Praise (89:1-2).*
- II. *God's Covenant With David (89:3-4).*
- III. *Praise to God for His Manifold Blessings (89:5-14).*
- IV. *The Blessings of God's Children (89:15-18).*
- V. *The Davidic Promises Rehearsed (89:19-27).*
- VI. *The Rule by Which David's Heirs Would be Judged (89:28-37).*

- VII. *The Present Ruined Condition of the Nation* (89:38-45).
- VIII. *His Plea for Mercy and Help* (89:46-51).
- IX. *Concluding Doxology* (89:52).
- BOOK IV: This collection of Psalms is chiefly anonymous. A number of the Psalms deal with the history of the nation.*
- PSALM 90 – A Psalm on the Frailty and Brevity of Human Life and God's Eternal Nature.*
- Author: Moses. Rabbinic tradition assigns the ten anonymous psalms that follow to Moses. Moses also wrote the psalms of Exodus 15 and Deuteronomy 32.
- Didactic.
- Background: The oldest psalm. A favorite of aged saints.
- I. *The Eternality of God* (90:1-2).
- II. *The Frailty of Man Contrasted With God* (90:3-12).
- III. *A Prayer for God's Blessings* (90:13).
- PSALM 91 – A Song About the Security of God's Children.*
- Author: Unknown.
- A liturgical psalm, i.e., one designed especially for temple worship. Note the change of speakers in the verses. This is called an antiphonal arrangement.
- Background: Unknown.
- I. *The Safety of a Good Man* (91:1-2). *First speaker.*

- II. *How God Delivers the Righteous (91:3-4). Second speaker.*
- III. *The Victory of the Righteous (91:5-8). First speaker responds.*
- IV. *His Confidence in God (91:9-13). Second speaker replies.*
- V. *God's Message of Protection (91:14-16). Note that God speaks here.*

PSALM 92 – A Thanksgiving Hymn for Jehovah's Goodness.

Author: Unknown.

A didactic song.

Background: In the ancient synagogue it was sung on Sabbath morning at the time of the morning sacrifice (Num. 38:9).

- I. *Praise to God for His Goodness (92:1-5).*
- II. *The Wicked Shall Fall (92:6-9).*
- III. *The Happiness of the Righteous (92:10-15).*

PSALM 93 – Singing the Majesty of Jehovah's Reign.

Author: Unknown.

A hymn of praise.

Background: A theocratic psalm praising God as King. Psalms 95-100 are also theocratic.

- I. *The Lord's Eternal Reign (93:1-2).*
- II. *He Rules Over the Wicked (93:3-4).*
- III. *God's Testimony and His House Will Stand Forever (93:5).*

PSALM 94 – A Prayer to God for Vengeance Upon the Wicked.

Author: Unknown.

Imprecatory.

Background: Unknown.

- I. *An Appeal for Vengeance Upon the Wicked (94:1-2).*
- II. *Their Wickedness Described (94:3-7):*
 - A. They are arrogant (94:4).
 - B. They prey on the weak (94:5-6).
 - C. They are irreligious (94:7).
- III. *His Exhortation to Sinners (94:8-11).*
- IV. *The Consolation of the Righteous (94:12-15).*
- V. *He Remembers God's Past Help (94:16-19).*
- VI. *The Wicked Will be Destroyed (94:20-23).*

PSALM 95 – A Song Praising God and Warning Sinners.

Author: Unknown.

A hymn of praise and instruction.

Background: A theocratic psalm. It was traditionally sung by the Hebrews on Friday evening to welcome the Sabbath.

- I. *A Call to Worship Jehovah (95:1-2).*
- II. *Reasons for Worshipping God (95:3-7a):*
 - A. He created the world (95:3-5).
 - B. He created man (95:6-7a).
- III. *A Warning Against Stubbornness (95:7b-11).*

PSALM 96 – A Hymn of Praise to Jehovah the Righteous Judge.

Author: Anonymous.

A song of praise.

Background: A theocratic psalm, predictive of Messiah's age.

- I. *A Charge to Sing to the Whole World About Our God (96:1-4).*
- II. *The Greatness of Our God (96:5-6).*
- III. *Even Gentiles Should Praise Our God (96:7-9).*
- IV. *The Whole Creation Bears Witness to Jehovah (96:10-13).*

PSALM 97 – A Hymn Praising the Almighty God.

Author: Unknown.

Didactic.

Background: A theocratic psalm.

- I. *Jehovah's Reign Described (97:1-2).*
- II. *The Effects of Jehovah's Reign on the Earth (97:3-6).*
- III. *The Influence of His Reign on Both Heathen and Saints (97:7-9).*
- IV. *His Exhortation to the Righteous (97:10-12).*

PSALM 98 – A Hymn of Praise to the Righteous Judge of All.

Author: Anonymous.

Praise and instruction.

Background: A theocratic psalm.

- I. *Jehovah the Subject of Our Praise (98:1-3).*
- II. *The Manner of Our Praise (98:4-6).*
- III. *The Extent of His Praise is World-Wide (98:7-9).*

PSALM 99 – A Song of Praise to Jehovah's Holiness.

Author: Anonymous.

Praise and instruction.

- Background: A theocratic psalm.
- I. *His Declaration of the Holiness of God* (99:1-3).
 - II. *The Character of God, a Basis for Praise* (99:4-5).
 - III. *Great Men of the Past Worshipped God and Were Blest* (99:6-9).

PSALM 100 — *A Call to All Nations to Worship Jehovah.*
 Author: Unknown.
 A hymn of praise.
 Background: This psalm provides a closing doxology to the theocratic psalms.

- I. *The Charge to Worship Jehovah* (100:1-4).
- II. *Reasons Why All Should Worship Him* (100:5).

PSALM 101 — *Resolutions of a Righteous King.*
 Author: David.
 Devotional.
 Background: Commitments made to God by David. This psalm was recited daily in the ancient synagogues.

- I. *Resolutions For His Own Private Life* (101:1-4).
- II. *Resolutions For His Kingdom* (101:5-8).

PSALM 102 — *A Lamentation by a Sufferer in Captivity.*
 Author: Unknown.
 A lamentation and petition.
 Background: Seems to reflect the situation of the captives in Babylon.

- I. *His Petition for a Hearing* (102:1-2).
- II. *His Condition Described* (102:3-11).

III. *His Consolation in Jehovah (102:12-22).*

IV. *His Closing Doxology (102:23-28).*

PSALM 103 – Praise for God's Mercy in Pardon.

Author: David.

Praise.

Background: Unknown.

I. *A Self-Exhortation to Praise Jehovah (103:1-5).*

II. *Reasons Why Men Should Praise Our God (103:6-18).*

III. *Concluding Charge to Bless Jehovah (103:19-22).*

PSALM 104 – Praise to Jehovah for His Creation and Providence of Nature.

Author: Unknown.

Praise and instruction.

Background: Unknown. The greatness of nature prompts this hymn of praise.

I. *The Charge to Bless God (104:1a).*

II. *The Creative Works of God Provide a Basis for Our Praise (104:1b-9).*

III. *His Providential Care Demands Our Praise (104:10-32).*

IV. *The Psalmist's Commitment to Serve God Always (104:33-35).*

PSALM 105 – Praise to God For His Wonderful Care of Israel.

Author: Anonymous.

A historical psalm.

Background: The poet traces the history of his nation from Abraham to the settlement in Canaan. The first 16 verses of this psalm are also found in

I Chron. 16:8-22.

- I. *An Exhortation to Praise God for His Covenant (105:1-7).*
- II. *Praise God for His Mercies to Israel (105:8-45):*
 - A. For his goodness to the Patriarchs (105:9-15).
 - B. For his providential care of Joseph (105:16-22).
 - C. For his care of Israel in Egypt (105:23-25).
 - D. For his mighty works through Moses in Egypt (105:26-36).
 - E. For his mighty work in the Exodus (105:37-43).
 - F. For his faithfulness in giving them the promised land (105:44-45).

PSALM 106 — A Song Recounting Israel's Ingratitude for God's Blessings.

Author: Unknown.

A historical psalm. Also styled a hallelujah psalm: note the closing line.

Background: He traces the history of Israel from the Exodus to the Babylonian captivity.

- I. *His Exhortation to Praise God (106:1-3).*
- II. *His Prayer for Himself and the Nation (106:4-5).*
- III. *His Confession of the Nation's Sins (106:6-46):*
 - A. Their sins in Egypt (106:6-12).
 - B. Their sins in the wilderness (106:13-33).
 - C. Their sins in Canaan (106:34-46).
- IV. *His Conclusion (106:47-48):*
 - A. His prayer for salvation from captivity (106:47).
 - B. His praise to Jehovah (106:48).

BOOK V: Praises the word of God. The majority of these psalms are anonymous. The name Jehovah is prominently used.

PSALM 107 – A Thanksgiving for Deliverance and Triumph Over Calamities of the Captivity.

Author: Unknown.

A psalm of praise and thanksgiving.

Background: Thought to have been written for the dedication of the second temple.

- I. *His Exhortation to the Redeemed (107:1).*
- II. *Praise to God the Savior of His People (107:2-32):*
 - A. He saved the famished pilgrims (107:2-9).
 - B. He saved those in prison (107:10-16).
 - C. He saved the penitent fools (107:17-22).
 - D. He saved mariners (107:23-32).
- III. *Praise to God for His Power and Providence (107:33-41).*
- IV. *The Use We Should Make of These Facts (107:42-43).*

PSALM 108 – A Psalm Praising God and Entreating for Victory.

Author: David.

Praise and petition.

Background: This seems to be David's battle song. It is a composite of Psalms 47 and 60.

- I. *His Resolution to Praise God (108:1-6).*
- II. *God's Promises Recalled (108:7-9).*
- III. *His Confidence of Victory Over Edom (108:10-13).*

PSALM 109 – A Call for Vengeance on His Enemies.

Author: David.

An imprecatory psalm.

Background: This was perhaps written against Doeg or Ahithophel. The most bitter of all the scriptures.

- I. *His Plea for Help Against His Enemies (109:1-5).*
- II. *His Imprecation (109:6-20).*
- III. *His Supplication for Mercy (109:21-29).*
- IV. *His Thanksgiving for Expected Blessings (109:30-31).*

PSALM 110 – A Prophetic Psalm of the Coming Messiah.

Author: David.

Messianic.

Background: Jehovah's promise to David that the Messiah would spring from his family (II Sam. 7:11-16). Four of its verses have New Testament fulfillment:

vs. 1 - Acts 2:34-35

vs. 2b - I Cor. 15:25

vs. 4 - Heb. 6:20; 7:15-17

vs. 5, 6 - Matt. 25:31-32

- I. *The Messiah's Reign Described (110:1-3).*
- II. *The Divine Oath of His Eternal Priesthood (110:4).*
- III. *His Victories and Judgment (110:5-7).*

PSALM 111 – Praise to Jehovah for Manifold Works.

Author: Unknown.

A song of exhortation and praise, arranged alphabetically. A hallelujah psalm.

Background: Psalms 111 and 112 seem to be by the

same author as both are framed on the same model. Both are alphabetical, with 22 lines in the Hebrew.

- I. *His Resolution to Praise God (111:1).*
- II. *The Motivation to That Praise (111:2-9).*
- III. *The Application (111:10).*

PSALM 112 – The Blessings of the God-Fearing Man.

Author: Unknown.

Didactic, alphabetical, Hallelujah.

Background: A companion Psalm to 111.

- I. *His Thesis (112:1).*
- II. *The Promised Blessings of the Righteous (112:2-9).*
- III. *The State of the Wicked Contrasted (112:10).*

PSALM 113 – Praise to God Who Exalts the Humble.

Author: Unknown.

A psalm of praise. A hallelujah psalm.

Background: Psalms 113-118 form the Hallel sung at Passover by the Hebrews: 113 and 114 were sung before the meal, 115 through 118 were sung afterwards.

- I. *His Exhortation to Praise Jehovah (113:1).*
- II. *When and Where to Praise Him (113:2-3).*
- III. *Reasons for Our Praise (113:4-9).*

PSALM 114 – A Psalm Celebrating Israel's Deliverance From Egypt.

Author: Anonymous.

Didactic.

Background: Designed to encourage the Hebrews by

remembering God's past help. Part of the Hallel.

- I. *God's Deliverance of Israel From Egypt (114:1-4).*
- II. *The Poet's Question (114:5-6).*
- III. *His Charge to Reverence God (114:7-8).*

PSALM 115 – A Song Praising Jehovah's Superiority to Idols.

Author: Unknown.

A psalm of praise and a hallelujah psalm.

Background: Likely written after the Babylonian captivity. Part of the Hallel sung at Passover.

- I. *Introduction: Give Glory to Jehovah (115:1).*
- II. *His Thesis: God Reigns in Heaven (115:2-3).*
- III. *The Idol Gods Described (115:4-8).*
- IV. *The Benefits of Serving the True God (115:9-16).*
- V. *Their Oath of Loyalty to Jehovah (115:17-18).*

PSALM 116 – A Song Thanking God for Deliverance From Death.

Author: Unknown,

A thanksgiving hymn and a hallelujah psalm.

Background: Sung during Passover as part of the Hallel.

- I. *His Profession of Love for Jehovah (116:1-2).*
- II. *He Recalls His Deliverance From Death (116:3-8).*
- III. *His Pledge to Serve God Always (116:9-19).*

PSALM 117 – A Summons to the Nations to Worship Jehovah.

Author: Unknown.

A song of praise and a hallelujah psalm.

Background: This psalm was used for the opening and closing of temple worship. It is the shortest chapter of the Bible, also the middle chapter. Its universal nature looks forward to the Christian age.

- I. *The Charge to Praise Jehovah (117:1).*
- II. *Reasons for Our Praise (117:2).*

PSALM 118 – A Song of Thanksgiving for the Lord's Goodness and Salvation.

Author: Unknown.

Thanksgiving and praise.

Background: A part of the Hallel used at the Passover. This is likely the hymn that Christ and the apostles sung before leaving the upper room (Matt. 26:30).

Verses 22-26 are prophetic of Christ.

Psalm 118 was a song of defiance sung by early Christians when pressured to participate in Emperor worship.

The Psalm describes worshippers going to the temple to offer animal sacrifices (vss. 19-27).

- I. *The Exhortation to Praise God (118:1-4).*
- II. *He Relates His Experience Under God's Hand (118:5-18).*
- III. *The Sacrificial Service of Thanksgiving for God's Blessings (118:19-29).*

PSALM 119 – An Eulogy to the Holy Scriptures.

Author: Unknown. Ancient Hebrews ascribed it to Ezra.

An alphabetic psalm. There are 22 stanzas of 8 verses each, arranged by the Hebrew alphabet. All the verses of each stanza begin with the same letter in the original.

Background: Seems to have been designed as a manual for meditation and personal spiritual development. All verses except 4 mention God's word. The longest chapter of the Bible.

- I. *The Joy of Walking in God's Precepts (119:1-8).*
- II. *A Resolution to Keep God's Law (119:9-16).*
- III. *Faithfulness to the Law Affords Strength in Persecution (119:17-24).*
- IV. *In Affliction He Seeks a Deeper Insight Into God's Word (119:25-32).*
- V. *A Prayer for Understanding and Guidance (119:33-40).*
- VI. *A Prayer for Grace and Courage (119:41-48).*
- VII. *God's Word Sustains One in Affliction (119:49-56).*
- VIII. *He Keeps God's Precepts and Fellowships God's People (119:57-64).*
- IX. *God's Goodness Drives Him to the Word (119:65-72).*
- X. *God's Deliverance of His Servant Comforts Others (119:73-80).*
- XI. *In Persecution He Finds Hope in God's Word (119:81-88).*
- XII. *He Praises the Immutability of God's Word (119:89-96).*
- XIII. *The Law of God Imparts Wisdom (119:97-104).*
- XIV. *He Vows His Fidelity to God's Word (119:105-112).*
- XV. *He Prays for Strength to be Loyal to God's Word*

(119:113-120).

XVI. *He Commits His Cause to God and Clings to His Word* (119:121-128).

XVII. *The Blessings of God's Word* (119:129-136).

XVIII. *God's Law Commands the Deepest Reverence* (119:137-144).

XIX. *The Word Guides Us In Trouble* (119:145-152).

XX. *Surrounded by His Enemies, He Looks to God to Revive Him* (119:153-160).

XXI. *He Has Both Loved and Kept God's Law* (119:161-168).

XXII. *He Prays for Insight Into God's Word* (119:169-176).

NOTE: Psalms 120-134 are called "songs of ascent." This meaning of the expression is obscure. It likely denotes songs sung when pilgrims went up to Jerusalem to worship.

PSALM 120 – A Petition for Deliverance From the Wicked.

Author: Unknown.

A song of complaint and petition.

Background: Written by one under severe attack by treacherous enemies. A song of ascents.

I. *His Prayer for Deliverance* (120:1-2).

II. *His Vindictive Against Liars* (120:3-4).

III. *His Complaint About His Circumstances* (120:5-7).

PSALM 121 – He Praises God for His Providential Help.

Author: Unknown.

A didactic song.

Background: A song of ascents.

- I. *His Faith and Trust in Jehovah (121:1-2).*
- II. *The Safety of All That Fear God (121:3-8).*

PSALM 122 – A Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem.

Author: David.

Didactic.

Background: A song of ascents.

- I. *His Joy in Worship (122:1-2).*
- II. *His Love for Jerusalem (122:3-5).*
- III. *His Exhortation to Pray for Jerusalem (122:6-7).*
- IV. *His Vow to Pray For Her (122:8-9).*

PSALM 123 – A Fervent Plea for Divine Help.

Author: Unknown.

A petition.

Background: Seems to have been written by an exile in Babylon, or in Nehemiah's day. A song of ascents.

- I. *His Faith Declared (123:1-2).*
- II. *His Plea for Mercy (123:3-4).*

PSALM 124 – He Praises God for Rescue From Near Disaster.

Author: The messoretic notes attribute this to David. Some scholars would associate it with the Hebrew's deliverance from Haman in Esther's day. (Thanksgiving praise).

Background: It may describe how God saved Israel from annihilation through Esther. A song of ascents.

- I. *He Acknowledges the Divine Deliverance (124:1-3).*

- II. *The Extent of Their Dangers (124:4-5).*
- III. *The Closeness of Their Escape (124:6-7).*
- IV. *The Lesson to Remember (124:8).*

PSALM 125 – A Hymn Celebrating Jehovah's Protection.

Author: Unknown.

Didactic.

Background: Likely based on the opposition faced by Nehemiah in rebuilding Jerusalem (Neh. 6: 10-18). A song of ascents.

- I. *The Safety and Security of Those Who Trust in Jehovah (125:1-2).*
- II. *His Faith in Deliverance (125:3).*
- III. *His Prayer for the Righteous (125:4).*
- IV. *The Destiny of the Wicked (125:5).*

PSALM 126 – A Song of Thanksgiving for the Restoration From Captivity.

Author: Unknown.

Thanksgiving.

Background: Celebrates the return of Israel from Babylonian captivity (II Chron. 36:22). A song of ascents.

- I. *He Celebrates Their Deliverance by Cyrus (126:1-3).*
- II. *He Prays for Other Captives Not Yet Freed (126:4-6).*

PSALM 127 – A Song About Jehovah the Provider and Protector of His People.

Author: Solomon.

Didactic.

Background: A song of ascents.

- I. *The Importance of God's Blessings in the Home and State (127:1-2).*
- II. *Children Are a Divine Gift and Blessing (127:3-5).*

PSALM 128 – The Domestic Blessings of Those That Fear Jehovah.

Author: Unknown.

Didactic.

Background: This theme is rarely dealt with in the psalms. A song of ascents.

- I. *His Beatitude (128:1).*
- II. *The Domestic Rewards for Faithfulness (128:2-4).*
- III. *His Prayer for His Fellow-Citizens (128:5-6).*

PSALM 129 – A Prayer for the Defeat of Israel's Enemies.

Author: Anonymous.

Imprecatory.

Background: The author reflects on past afflictions of the nation and then utters an imprecation against the enemy. A song of ascents. This psalm is very similar to Psalm 124.

- I. *The Unsuccessful Malice of Their Enemies (129:1-4).*
- II. *Zion's Enemies Shall Fail (129:5-8).*

PSALM 130 – The Cry of a Soul Overwhelmed With a Burden of Sin.

Author: Unknown.

A penitential psalm.

Background: The author feels a heavy burden of sin and pleads for mercy. This psalm reflects the grace of the New Testament gospel.

- I. *His Plea for an Audience (130:1-2).*
- II. *He Sees Grace as His Only Hope (130:3-4).*
- III. *He Expresses Patience and Hope (130:5-6).*
- IV. *His Exhortation to God's People (130:7-8).*

PSALM 131 – A Song of Humble Trust in Jehovah.

Author: David.

Devotional.

Background: A song of ascents.

- I. *He Confesses His Humility (131:1).*
- II. *His Confidence in God (131:2).*
- III. *His Exhortation (131:3).*

PSALM 132 – A Prayer for God's Blessings on the Sanctuary.

Author: Unknown.

A petition for divine help.

Background: Likely written at the time of the dedication of Solomon's Temple (II Chron. 5 and 6).

- I. *A Prayer Reminiscing David's Pledge to Build the Temple (132:1-5).*
- II. *He Briefly Traces the History of the Ark (132:6-10).*
- III. *God Responds, Reaffirming His Pledge to David (132:11-18).*

PSALM 133 – A Song Praising the Beauty of Brotherly Unity.

Author: David.

Didactic.

Background: A song of ascents.

- I. *A Call to Consider the Virtues of Unity (133:1).*

- II. *He Poetically Describes Brotherly Unity (133:2-3):*
 - A. Religious beauty (133:2).
 - B. The beauty of nature (133:3).

PSALM 134 – A Psalm Greeting the Temple Night-watchers.

Author: Unknown.

Didactic.

Background: Seems to have been sung to greet the priests and Levites who did night service at the temple. A song of ascents.

- I. *The Exhortation to the Priests and Levites (134:1-2).*
- II. *The Priests Bless the People (134:3).*

PSALM 135 – A Psalm Praising Jehovah and Ridiculing Idols.

Author: Unknown.

Praise and instruction.

Background: This psalm is a composite of several other scriptures. It is a hallelujah psalm.

- I. *A Call to the Priests to Praise God (135:1-2).*
- II. *Motives for Praising God (135:3-14).*
- III. *Jehovah Contrasted With the Idols (135:15-18).*
- IV. *His Exhortation to All Israel to Praise God (135:19-21).*

PSALM 136 – Thanksgiving for Jehovah's Eternal Loving-kindness.

Author: Anonymous.

A historical psalm, to be sung antiphonally.

Background: Sung at the opening of the Passover.

It traces the work of God from creation to Canaan.

- I. *An Exhortation to Praise God (136:1-3).*
- II. *A Declaration of God's Goodness and Majesty (136:4-9).*
- III. *A Praise to God for His Providential Care of Israel (136:10-25).*
- IV. *Concluding Praise (136:26).*

PSALM 137 – A Sorrowful Song of the Exiles in Babylon.

Author: Unknown.

A devotional psalm and imprecation.

Background: Written by a returned exile from the Babylonian captivity.

- I. *His Reminiscence of the Captivity (137:1-3).*
- II. *Their Loyalty to God and Their Nation (137:4-6).*
- III. *His Imprecation (137:7-9).*

PSALM 138 – A Song of Thanksgiving for Divine Favor.

Author: David.

A thanksgiving hymn.

Background: God's promise to bless David's dynasty and predictive of the Messiah's reign (II Sam. 7:11-16).

- I. *His Vow of Thanksgiving (138:1-3).*
- II. *His Prophecy of the Christian Age (138:4-6).*
- III. *His Confidence in God's Salvation (138:7-8).*

PSALM 139 – A Song Praising the All-Wise, All-Powerful God.

Author: David.

A didactic song of praise.

Background: A beautiful poetic description of developing life in the womb.

- I. *God's Great Knowledge Praised (139:1-6).*
- II. *God's Omnipresence Praised (139:7-12).*
- III. *God's Creative Power Praised (139:13-18).*
- IV. *His Abhorrence of the Wicked (139:19-24).*

PSALM 140 – A Prayer for Protection Against Evil Men.

Author: David.

A petition and imprecation.

Background: When David was persecuted by Saul.

- I. *He Pleads for Deliverance From the Wicked (140:1-5).*
- II. *He Relates His Positive Prayer (140:6-8).*
- III. *His Imprecation (140:9-10).*
- IV. *His Moral or Proverb (140:11-13).*

PSALM 141 – A Prayer for Protection.

Author: David.

A devotional petition.

Background: Seems to relate to Absalom's rebellion.

- I. *His Prayer (141:1-2).*
- II. *His Request for Divine Help in Doing Right (141:3-4).*
- III. *His Response to the Correction of the Righteous (141:5).*
- IV. *His Faith in the Outcome (141:6).*
- V. *He Describes the Nation's Condition (141:7).*
- VI. *His Plea for Heavenly Protection (141:8-10).*

PSALM 142 – A Prayer for Deliverance in Troublous

Times.

Author: David.

A petition and instruction.

Background: When persecuted by Saul (I Sam. 22:1; 24:3).

- I. *He Describes His Conduct When in Trouble (142:1-2).*
- II. *He Declares His Predicament (142:3-4).*
- III. *His Prayer for Deliverance From Prison (142:5-7).*

PSALM 143 – A Penitent Cry For Help.

Author: David.

A petition and devotion. A penitential psalm.

Background: Possibly when pursued by Absalom.

- I. *His Petition for a Hearing (143:1-6):*
 - A. His problem (143:3).
 - B. His state of mind (143:4).
- II. *His Request for Heavenly Mercies (143:7-11).*
- III. *The Basis for His Request (143:12).*

PSALM 144 – A Battle Hymn.

Author: David.

Prayer and praise.

Background: A hymn requesting God's providential help in a war. This psalm is a composite of other psalms.

- I. *His Thanksgiving (144:1-4).*
- II. *His Request for Divine Intervention (144:5-11).*
- III. *A Discourse on Happiness (144:12-15).*

PSALM 145 – A Hymn of Praise for God's Goodness.

Author: David.

A hymn of praise and adoration.

Background: Arranged alphabetically. Called the “tehillah psalm,” i.e., a hymn of praise. The last of David’s psalms.

- I. *His Vow to God (145:1-2).*
- II. *He Celebrates God’s Greatness (145:3-9).*
- III. *God’s Works Praise Him (145:10-13).*
- IV. *God’s Mercies to Men Praise Him (145:14-20).*
- V. *The Author’s Concluding Praise (145:21).*

PSALM 146 – Praise to Jehovah for His Abundant Help.

Author: Unknown.

A hallelujah psalm, praising the Lord.

Background: This and those following are thought to be the work of those who returned from Babylonian captivity.

- I. *His Resolution to Praise Jehovah (146:1-2).*
- II. *A Warning Against Trusting Men (146:3-4).*
- III. *A Beatitude (146:5-7).*
- IV. *Reasons for the Foregoing Blessings (146:8-10).*

PSALM 147 – Praise to God for the Restoration of Jerusalem.

Author: Unknown.

A hallelujah psalm.

Background: Reflects the joy of the returned exiles when Jerusalem was rebuilt (see Neh. 12:27-43).

- I. *He Praises God for His Goodness to Jerusalem (147:1-3).*
- II. *God’s Judgments Are Sure (147:4-6).*
- III. *He Extols God’s Providential Care of Those Who Fear*

Him (147:7-11).

IV. *He Praises God for Protecting Jerusalem (147:12-14).*

V. *He Extols God's Providence in Nature (147:15-18).*

VI. *He Glories in God's Word (147:19-20).*

PSALM 148 – A Psalm Urging All Creation to Praise God.

Author: Unknown.

A hallelujah psalm.

Background: The epitome of Hebrew praise. Our hymn, *Let Them Praise Give Jehovah*, is an adaptation of this psalm.

I. *The Praise of God in Heaven (148:1-6).*

Reasons for that praise (148:5-6).

II. *The Praise of God Upon the Earth (148:7-14).*

Reasons for the praise (148:13-14).

PSALM 149 – The Whole Nation Charged to Praise God.

Author: Unknown.

A hallelujah psalm.

Background: This appears to be a victory song. A misuse of this psalm by Casper Sciopius in his *Clarion of the Sacred War*, inflamed the Catholic princes of Europe to launch the Thirty Years' War. Thomas Munster used it to launch the Peasant's War in Germany.

I. *Praise Jehovah for Past Blessings (149:1-4).*

II. *Praise God for Future Victories (149:5-9).*

PSALM 150 – The Concluding Praise of the Book.

Author: Unknown.

A hallelujah psalm.

Background: As each of the previous books of Psalms ended with an appropriate benediction, so this psalm brings the entire series to an end. The Rabbis taught that there were thirteen attributes of God, therefore, the thirteen praises of this psalm.

- I. *Praise God With the Voice (150:1-2).*
- II. *Praise God With Musical Instruments (150:3-5).*
- III. *Let All of Creation Praise God (150:6).*

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

- 1. May we not only admire the beauty, but acknowledge the power of sacred poetry and songs.
- 2. May we always worship Jehovah in the beauty of holiness.
- 3. Let us strive to capture in our lives the intimate fellowship with God which David knew.
- 4. Remember to utilize these great hymns as food for your soul and especially in hardships and sorrows.
- 5. "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so," loud and clear to all the world (107:2).
- 6. May we always be found praising God as was David.
- 7. Let us always give glory to God for his omnipotence.
- 8. Never neglect this gold mine of precious truth in your preaching, teaching and

devotional life.

9. Although David could call for the bitterest curses upon his enemies, we live under the law of Christ which teaches us to do our enemies good (Rom. 12:17-21).
10. While the Hebrew could praise God acceptably with harp, pipe and symbol, our New Covenant authorizes us only to sing (Eph. 5:19).
11. May we always love and cherish the word of God like the writer of Psalm 119 did.
12. Let us love the Lord's church with that degree of devotion expressed in Psalm 84.
13. In our old age, may we remain loyal to our God as the psalmist described himself in Psalm 71.
14. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity (Psalm 133:1).
15. Except Jehovah build the house they labor in vain who build it (Psalm 127:1).
16. Children are a heritage of Jehovah; and the fruit of the womb is his reward (Psalm 127:3).

PROVERBS – A GUIDE TO PRACTICAL GODLINESS

- Key Verse:* 9:10. “The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom.”
- Key Thought:* The importance of the godly virtues of labor, honesty, thrift and morality and the value of dealing with your fellow man by the law of love.
- Key Word:* “My Son”, used some 10 times usually to introduce a new lesson. The term probably refers to his students.

I. *Authors:*

- A. Solomon (1:1 - 29:27).
- B. Agur, the son of Jakeh the oracle (chapter 30).
- C. King Lemuel and his mother (chapter 31).
- D. Solomon
 1. Son of David and Bathsheba (II Sam. 12:24).
 2. Born at Jerusalem approximately 1,000 - 990 B. C.
 3. His name:
 - a. Solomon - “peaceful.”
 - b. Jedidiah - “beloved of the Lord,” given by Nathan the prophet (II Sam. 12:24-25).
 4. He began his reign in about 972-970 B.C., being near 20 years old.
 5. His accomplishments:

- a. He built the temple of God at Jerusalem (I Kings 5-6).
- b. He built his great palace (I Kings 7: 1-12).
- c. He developed Israel as a commercial power (I Kings 10:14-23; II Chron. 9:10-27).
- d. He accumulated one of the greatest masses of wealth ever known.
- e. As a literary man, he was a naturalist speaking on the flora and fauna.
- f. He spoke 3,000 proverbs, he wrote 1,005 songs (I Kings 4:29-34). His wisdom came from God, (I Kings 3: 11-12).
- g. His kingdom stretched from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates and from Mt. Lebanon to the border of Egypt (I Kings 4:21).
- h. He reigned in pomp and power 40 years (I Kings 11:42).
6. His failures:
 - a. He had 700 wives and 300 concubines.
 - b. Many of them were foreign women.
 - c. They turned him aside to idolatry (I Kings 11:1-8).
 - d. His lavish luxury was a burden to his subjects (I Kings 12:4).
 - e. He taught much better than he lived.
- E. Other books by the author:

1. Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Psalms 72 and 127.
2. Altogether he wrote 3,000 proverbs. We have only some 800 recorded. He wrote 1,005 songs of which we have 2 psalms and the Song of Solomon.
3. He gleaned the wisdom of other wise men (Eccl. 12:9).

II. *The Book:*

- A. Name: It is named after the type of literature it contains.
- B. Date: That part written by Solomon would have been done between 971-931 B. C. The date of the other is unknown.
- C. Proverb defined: "A proverb is a short sentence conveying some moral truth or practical lesson in a concise, pointed form."
 1. "The Hebrew word *mashal* means not only such terse aphoristic sentences, but similitude, parable" (Joseph Angus).
 2. "An allegorical saying, where more is meant than meets the eye. A short saying which stands for a whole discourse or lecture" (William Deal).
 3. A proverb is "an apple of gold in a network of silver" (Prov. 25:11).
- D. Purpose:
 1. "To give the young man knowledge and direction" (1:2-5).
 2. To provide principles for godly living in a simple poetic style that can be easily

memorized.

- E. What great men have said about Proverbs:
 1. “All the heathen moralists and proverbilists joined together cannot furnish us with one such book as that of the Proverbs” (Stuart).
 2. “The Book of Proverbs is the best statesman’s manual which was ever written. An adherent to the political economy and spirit of that collection of apothegms and essays would do more to eradicate from a people the causes of extravagance, debasement and ruin, than all the contributions to political economy of (the great statesmen) together” (Coleridge).
 3. “Every man aiming at godliness should make it his daily handbook or book of devotion and often read in it and compare with it his life” (Luther).
 4. The Jews likened Proverbs to the outer court of the Temple; Ecclesiastes to the holy place; Song of Solomon to the holy of Holies.
- F. The type of literature of the Proverbs.
 1. Proverbs is classed as wisdom or poetic literature because of its content and form.
 2. “. . . intuition or insight was the method of Hebrew wisdom and the epigrammatic proverb its form. The Jewish wise men had no argument to sustain, no chain of reasoning to follow. He presents his truth

with the simple assurance of one who has seen" (W. T. Purkiser).

3. Proverbial teaching is one of the most ancient methods of instruction, especially in the eastern world.
- G. Some guidelines for understanding the Proverbs:
1. The style of Proverbs is "Hebrew Parallelism." "Nearly every sentence is antithetical or explanatory, and attention to corresponding clauses will often fix the reading and determine the sense" (Angus).
 2. Rules for applying the Proverbs:
 - a. Like other general laws, some of them have occasional exceptions. Not all are unlimited or universal (see 10:27).
 - b. The force and significance of these maxims will be most clearly seen and felt if they be studied in the light of Scriptural examples.
 - c. "We shall perceive the meaning and utility of the Proverbs, in proportion to our experience in true religion, our acquaintance with our own hearts, and with human nature, and the extent and accuracy of our observation of the character and affairs of men" (Thomas Scott).
 3. "*Wisdom* is throughout, contrasted with Folly, Simplicity, and Scorning. *Wisdom* is synonymous with Understanding, Instruction, Learning, Knowledge,

Discernment, Subtlety, Counsel, Discretion, Prudence, and the Fear of Jehovah” (John R. Sampey).

H. Some interesting facts about Proverbs:

1. Proverbs is a book of moral instruction based upon “the fear of God.”
2. The book has no Messianic message. Rather than dealing with redemption, it deals with the practical righteousness of everyday living.
3. Proverbs appeals to all people of all ages and nations. It is truly universal in its message.
4. Proverbs demonstrates practical godliness: “In Psalms we find the Christian on his knees.

In Proverbs we find him on his feet.

The Psalms are for devotion;

The Proverbs are for living.

The Psalms are for the “closet” of prayer.

The Proverbs are for the home, business place, school and playground.”

III. *Proverbs Summarized:*

- A. Counsel for young men (chapters 1-10).
- B. Counsel for all men (chapters 11-20).
- C. Counsel for rulers (chapters 21-31).

OUTLINE OF PROVERBS:

INTRODUCTION (1:1-6):

- A. Title (vs. 1).

- B. Purpose (vss. 2-5).
- C. Method (vs. 6).
- I. *Wisdom and Folly Contrasted (1:7 - 9:18):*
 - A. Foundations of wisdom (1:7-9).
 - B. Warning against being enticed by sinners to crime (robbery) (1:10-19).
 - C. Wisdom's personified call and warning (1:20-33).
 - D. Parental counsel on Wisdom which will protect a son from wicked men and women by the knowledge of God (2:1-22).
 - E. The life of Wisdom (piety) described (3:1-35).
 - F. A father's personal testimony that Wisdom is the best way (4:1-27).
 - G. Warning against immoral women and exhortation to marital fidelity (5:1-23).
 - H. Warnings against various evils (6:1-35):
 - 1. Against security debts (vss. 1-5).
 - 2. Against laziness (vss. 6-11).
 - 3. Against a cowardly defamer who sows discord among brethren (vss. 12-19).
 - 4. Against adultery (vss. 20-35).
 - I. Warning against the seductive adulteress (7:1-27).
 - J. Magnificent address of wisdom (8:1-36).
 - K. Two invitations (9:1-18):
 - 1. Wisdom invites (vss. 1-12).
 - 2. Folly's invitation (vss. 13-18).
- II. *Collection of Nearly 400 Proverbs (10:1 - 22:16).*
- III. *"The Words of the Wise" (22:17 - 24:34):*
 - A. Social advice (22:17 - 23:14).

- B. Parental counsels (23:15 - 24:22).
- C. Concerning social order (24:23-34).
- IV. *Another Group of Solomon's Proverbs, Copied by the Scribes of Hezekiah (25:1 - 29:27).*
- V. *Three Appendices (30:1 - 31:31).*
 - A. The words of Agur (30:1-33).
 - 1. Introduction on human incompleteness in wisdom (vss. 1-4).
 - 2. A proverb, a prayer, and a proverb (vss. 5-10).
 - 3. Four evil things (vss. 11-14).
 - 4. Four things eternally unsatisfied (vss. 15-16).
 - 5. Four things that excite wonder (vss. 18-19)
 - 6. Four things that cause terror (vss. 21-23).
 - 7. Four things that are small but wise (vss. 24-28).
 - 8. Four things that are stately (vss. 29-31).
 - B. Words of King Lemuel - taught him by his mother (31:1-9). She warns against lust and passion.
 - C. Alphabetical poem praising a worthy woman (31:10-31).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

- 1. The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom.
- 2. If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.
- 3. Illicit sex is the bait that draws one into a deadly trap.

4. First godliness, then wisdom; these are life's greatest treasures.
5. Young people, listen to your parents.
6. Work is an honorable profession.
7. Laziness is an evil disease that will ruin the most promising life.
8. Strong drink is the sport of fools.
9. Whatever you sow, you will surely reap.
10. A good name is far more valuable than worldly treasures.
11. Next to salvation, a worthy woman is the greatest blessing a man can obtain.

ECCLESIASTES – THE SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS AND MEANING IN LIFE

- Key Verses:** 1:2-3, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, what profit hath man of all his labor wherein he laboreth under the sun?”
12:13-14, “Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.”
- Key Thought:** Life apart from God is completely void of meaning and purpose and full of disappointment.
- Key Words:** “Vanity”. It is used 37 times and means futility, uselessness, nothingness.
- Key Concept:** “Under the sun.” It is used 28 times and means apart from God.
- Key Person:** Solomon, King of Israel.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

- I. ***The Author:***
- A. Solomon, “the son of David, king in Jerusalem” (1:1):
 - 1. The experiences described in chapter two could be only those of this great king.
 - 2. Note however that Solomon’s name nowhere appears in the book.
 - B. The search related in this book evidently occurred while Solomon was in a state of separation

from God (I Kings 11:1-10).

- C. For more information on Solomon's life see the notes on Proverbs.
- D. Since the time of Luther, a large number of scholars have questioned the Solomonic authorship:
 - 1. Today the majority of scholars, including conservatives, feel that a later author penned it.
 - 2. Briefly stated their argument rests on the following points:
 - a. The historical facts of Solomon's life as seen in I Kings 2-11, they argue, do not match the state of things described in Ecclesiastes.
 - b. The language of Ecclesiastes is sprinkled with words and expressions dating from the Persian period.
 - c. Many would date the book from the time of Malachi.
 - 3. This view sees the book as the product of an unknown inspired author who wrote using the common literary device of "impersonation." They would say that much of what is presented as said and done was actually from the experience and teaching of Solomon.
 - 4. For a strong argument for the Solomonic authorship see Gleason Archer's *Survey of Old Testament Introduction*. For a strong case against it see H. C. Leupold's

Exposition of Ecclesiastes.

5. Following Jewish and early Christian tradition we ascribe the book to Solomon.

E. Other writings by Solomon:

1. Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Psalms 72 and 127.
2. He gleaned the wisdom of other wise men (Eccl. 12:9).

II. *The Book:*

A. Name: In the Hebrew Bible its title is *Koheleth* i.e., “the words of the preacher.”

1. The writers of the Septuagint rendered it *ekklesiastes* from which we get our English title.
2. The Hebrew term describes one who speaks to an assembly.

B. Date:

1. If Solomon wrote it, the date would fall between 945-931 B. C.
2. Advocates of the anonymous author offer dates ranging from 800-200 B. C.

C. Purposes:

1. To convince people of the vanity of any world-view which does not rise above man himself.
2. He shows us the utter insufficiency of all earthly pursuits and things to confer solid happiness. He then seeks to draw us away from that which is only apparently good to that which is real and permanently good,

i.e., fearing God and keeping his commandments.

3. Solomon evaluates all things of life in order to identify that which is truly valuable and worthwhile.
4. He demonstrates that we may have every mental, physical and social pleasure with riches, fame, honor and all earthly joys and still never realize our true purpose for existing and thus miss the only genuine and enduring joy.
5. Ecclesiastes teaches that the absence of God from one's life allows the entrance of every kind of unhappiness.
6. God is thus the ultimate standard and point of reference by which every aspect of life must be interpreted.
7. He pronounces the judgment of vanity upon all philosophies that make the material world of human pleasure an end in itself.

D. The theme:

"The theme of the book is the 'vanity' of everything 'under the sun'. This is first announced, then proved from the preacher's personal experience, and from his wide-reaching observation. Finally by appeal and declaration, he shows that the whole of life is only found as there is recognition of things above the sun, as well as those under the sun - of things spiritual as well as material." G. C. Morgan.

- E. Helpful hints for interpreting Ecclesiastes:
1. It is a dramatic autobiography of Solomon's experience and observations, while he was estranged from God. Forsaking God, he sought satisfaction in philosophy, science and worldly pleasure.
 2. In this book God gives us a record of all that human thinking can discover about the meaning and purpose of life. The arguments advanced are Solomon's not God's. We have an accurate record of what Solomon said and did, given by inspiration.
 3. With the above in mind, the meaning of several passages will be plain. Some reflect shrewd common sense; others contain glimpses of deep spiritual truth; others are only partially true and some are false (1:15; 2:24; 2:16; 3:19-20; 9:2).
 4. Solomon was wrestling the problem of how to find happiness and meaning in life without God (1:3). He relates his search for happiness in science (1:4-11); philosophy (1:12-18); pleasure, mirth and strong drink (2:1-3); building castles, possessions and wealth (2:4-8a); music, entertainment and sexual indulgence (2:8b); position and power (2:9-11); fatalism (2:12 - 3:15); materialism (3:16-22); and morality (7:1-18). The answer was found in the lesson he had learned long ago from his father:

“Fear God and keep his commandments” (12:13).

5. It is most important to remember that Solomon did not know all that we know about a future life that would compensate for the troubles of this life and explain its mysteries. Immortality was only a vague hope until revealed through the gospel (II Tim. 1:10).

F. Interesting facts about the book:

1. Ecclesiastes is one of the most puzzling books in the Old Testament.
2. It is considered the most melancholy book of the Bible.
3. Strangely, it has been a favorite of noted infidels such as Voltaire, Fredrick the Great and Volney. Failing to grasp its message, they identified with Solomon's fruitless search for meaning and happiness. Of course they ignored the last chapter.
4. The discussion of the book is from the viewpoint of a philosophical observer of social and political life rather than a king.
5. It has some remarkable statements of scientific foreknowledge.
 - a. The cycle of evaporation and rain (1:6-7).
 - b. The heart pictured as a water wheel pump (12:6).
6. The covenant name Jehovah is not used; it

is always Elohim, the Creator God.

7. It has no Messianic message.
 8. Ecclesiastes seems to be directed especially toward youth (See 11:9 - 12:7). The Hebrews considered one a youth until age 40.
 9. It is one of the most difficult books of the Bible to correctly interpret. Nearly every scholar has a differing view. It is a favorite of such groups as Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses who deny the immortality of the soul.
- G. Type of literature: Ecclesiastes is "wisdom literature." See the *Appendix* for an extended discussion of "wisdom teaching."
- H. Ecclesiastes and the Hebrews:
1. In the Jewish Bible it is placed in the Megilloth or Scrolls along with Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, and Esther.
 2. Along with Esther and Song of Solomon, its place in the Canon was seriously questioned by the rabbis at the Council of Jamnia in 90 A. D. (Bernard Anderson).
 3. Jews read Ecclesiastes on the third day of the Feast of Tabernacles.
- I. Ecclesiastes and the New Testament:
1. The book is not specifically quoted in the New Testament.
 2. There are however a number of parallel passages:
 - a. 5:1 in I Tim. 3:15.

- b. 5:2 in Matt. 6:7.
- c. 6:2 in Luke 12:20.
- d. 11:5 in John 3:8.
- e. 12:14 in II Cor. 5:10.

J. What great men have said about Ecclesiastes:
 E. C. Stedman, "Whether prose or verse, I know nothing grander than Ecclesiastes in its impassioned survey of mortal pain and pleasure, its estimate of failure and success: none of more noble sadness; no poem working more indomitably for spiritual illumination."

III. *Ecclesiastes Summarized:*

- A. The Problem: How to be satisfied and happy without God (1:1-3).
- B. The Search: Solomon sought happiness and satisfaction in every way available to no avail (1:4 - 12:12).
- C. The Conclusion: Fear God and keep his commandments, this is the whole of man (12:13-14).

OUTLINE OF ECCLESIASTES:

I. *The Prologue (1:1-11):*

- A. Title of the book (1:1).
- B. The theme, "The vanity of all merely human effort and experience" (1:2-3).
- C. Existence "under the sun" is naught but a vicious cycle (1:4-11).

II. *Demonstration of the Vanity of Things Under the Sun (1:12 - 2:26):*

- A. Vanity of striving after wisdom and knowledge (1:12-18).
 - B. Emptiness of pleasure and wealth (2:1-11).
 - C. Human learning is vain since all die (2:12-17).
 - D. Vanity of human labor, since at death it will be left to those who are often undeserving (2:18-23).
 - E. Even the normal enjoyment of life's production and innocent pleasures is vain (2:24-26).
- III. *Coming to Terms With the Laws of Life.* (These things also demonstrate the vanity of things under the sun) (3:1 - 6:12):
- A. Facts of life and death demand submission (3:1-22):
 - 1. The changes and disruptions of life are frustrating (3:1-9).
 - 2. God is the only source of abiding values (3:10-15).
 - 3. The vanity caused by wickedness and death under the sun (3:16-22).
 - B. The vanity and disappointments of earthly life (4:1-16):
 - 1. The sad lot of the oppressed reflects this vanity (4:1-3).
 - 2. The futility of earthly labor (4:4-6).
 - 3. The vanity of the acquisition of riches (4:7-8).
 - 4. Life's struggles are better faced by partners, than alone (4:9-12).
 - 5. Dominion and empire are vanity (4:13-16).

- C. The emptiness of a selfish life (5:1 - 6:12):
 - 1. Warning against vain religion (5:1-7).
 - 2. Comfort in the face of oppression (5:8-9).
 - 3. The vanity of riches (5:10-20):
 - a. Riches cannot satisfy (5:10-12).
 - b. Riches can harm a man (5:13-17).
 - c. Enjoy all the good God gives you (5:18-20).
 - 4. The vanity of possessing goods that cannot be enjoyed (6:1-12)
 - a. Desire is insatiable (6:7-9).
 - b. Apart from God, we cannot understand the real reason for life (6:10-12).

IV. *Deductions From the Previous Research With Rules and Warnings for Life (7:1 - 12:8)*

- A. Advice for living in a sin-cursed world (7:1-29):
 - 1. Benefits of affliction (7:1-4).
 - 2. Pitfalls to avoid: frivolity, dishonest gain and a hasty spirit (7:5-10).
 - 3. Wisdom is greater than wealth in coping with life (7:11-12).
 - 4. True wisdom accepts what Providence sends (7:13-14).
 - 5. Warnings against excess; the strength and value of wisdom (7:15-22).
 - 6. Man's unaided search for wisdom cannot discover the true wisdom of God (7:23-24).
 - 7. The vanity of romance (7:25-29).
- B. Accept the realities of an imperfect world (8:1 - 9:1):

1. Be obedient to governmental authority (8:1-5).
 2. Accept the hardships of life even though you do not understand them (8:6-9).
 3. God will settle the score with the wicked (8:10-13).
 4. Injustice under the sun leads the foolish to empty hedonism, but faith believes God will right these wrongs that we presently cannot understand (8:14 - 9:1).
- C. Since death is inevitable, make the best use of life (9:2-18):
1. The righteous and sinners both die (9:1-3).
 2. Now is the only time man has to attain his goals under the sun (9:4-6).
 3. A righteous man will live his days under the sun to their fullest (9:7-10).
 4. Providence governs life and death (9:11-12)
 5. Wisdom is greater than strength and weapons of force (9:13-18).
- D. Uncertainties of life and disruptions of folly (10:1-20):
1. Even a little folly is ruinous (10:1-4).
 2. Some frustrations of life under the sun; things sometimes get out of joint (10:5-11)
 3. A fool is spotted by his words (10:12-15).
 4. Two kinds of rulers contrasted (10:16-20).
- E. Recommendations for a happy life (11:1 - 12:8)
1. Benevolence pays dividends (11:1-2).
 2. The wise man will cheerfully labor all his

days (11:3-8).

3. The time to begin serving God is in youth before the afflictions of old age come (11:9 - 12:8).

V. *Conclusion (12:8-14):*

- A. Solomon's purpose; to teach true wisdom (12:9-10).
- B. These lessons are more valuable than a world of books (12:11-12).
- C. Fear God and keep his commands, this is the whole of man's life for God will judge our every deed (12:13-14).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. Any philosophy of life that excludes God is worthless.
2. God is the ultimate standard and point of reference by which every aspect of life must be interpreted.
3. Wisdom, money, pleasure and power, singly or combined, cannot provide happiness apart from God.
4. The greatest degree of human wisdom cannot by itself protect us from foolish mistakes about the purpose and meaning of life.
5. Life apart from God is a vicious cycle.
6. Worldly wisdom without God only increases grief and sorrow.
7. It is vanity to lay up great treasure for heirs

who will often squander it.

8. There is a proper time and place for everything.
9. God has set eternity in the heart of every man, and only the things of eternity can satisfy the heart.
10. There are many advantages in companionship.
11. Do not utter hasty vows unto God.
12. The material desires of man can never be fully satisfied; they must be controlled.
13. A good name is better than riches.
14. Do not waste time dreaming about “the good old days.”
15. True wisdom accepts what Providence sends one’s way.
16. Failure to swiftly punish the wicked encourages others in evil doing.
17. The race is not always to the swift or the victory to the strong.
18. Remember to serve God in your youth while you have something useful to offer in his cause.
19. Fear God and keep his commandments, this is the whole duty of man.
20. God will judge every work, whether good or evil.

APPENDIX TO ECCLESIASTES

*Wise Men and Wisdom Literature*I. *Wise Men:*

- A. There were three classes of teachers in ancient Israel:
 - 1. “For the law shall not perish from the *priest*, nor counsel from the *wise*, nor the word from the *prophet*” (Jer. 18:18).
 - 2. Prophets presented new revelations from God to the nation.
 - a. Priests taught the Law and conducted and maintained the traditional temple worship and customs.
 - b. Wise men gave sage counsel and advice with keen insight derived from observation of life and years of experience. Also, they gleaned wisdom from the ancient body of knowledge passed down from earlier generations. Theirs was a practical wisdom for godly living.
- B. Their wisdom defined:
 - 1. There is a wisdom which man seeks in books, schools and museums or that is acquired through experience and meditation.
 - 2. There is a wisdom that came to man as a direct gift from God. This was more than the word of God recorded in scripture; it

was a continual giving such as Solomon received (I Kings 3:10-12).

3. The Hebrews considered Solomon the foremost of all wise men. His wisdom surpassed all the wisdom of the people of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt (I Kings 4:29-34).
4. The Hebrews believed the wisdom of their wise men to be a divine gift, not simply the result of human effort or superior intelligence.
5. A wise man was first of all a knowledgeable man with special skills, capable of instructing others because of his superior understanding of how life should be lived and what its purpose is.

II. *Characteristics of the Wisdom of the Wise Men:*

- A. They were counsellors and advisors to which people resorted for guidance not provided for in the Law of Moses or in the powerful messages of the prophets.
- B. The wise man “expresses what we all feel, but cannot say: and his sayings pass into proverbs among his people, and his phrases become household words and idioms of their daily speech . . .” (Genung).
- C. Wise men had little to say about institutional religion or the covenant between Jehovah and Israel. Their concern was with men as individuals and their personal needs and social

relationships. They dealt with how to behave in daily life and with personal character. They sought a good life of coherence, value and meaning.

- D. Practical ethics was their principal field, and the results of their reflections were usually formulated in maxims, parables, proverbs and fables. Also used were riddles, allegories, hortatory discourses, soliloquies, debates and rhetorical questions.
- E. They taught rational living, which at the same time is good and godly living. They taught that a life controlled by reason is the one with fewest sorrows.
- F. Since books were rare and readers scarce, the wisdom of a nation was preserved and passed on by oral instruction. The wise men put the message in easily remembered proverbs or stories.
- G. In their writings:
 - 1. The premises are universal.
 - 2. Wisdom is far more than human sagacity; it is a gift from God (Prov. 3:5-7).
 - 3. They say little about life beyond the grave.
 - 4. The individual is the center of interest.
 - 5. The ideal man is pictured as one who believes in God and endeavors to live prudently by observation of life and nature. He is intelligent, earnest, hardworking, fair, benevolent, truthful.
 - 6. Wisdom literature was a mixture of

philosophy and poetry that blended the religious code of God with the everyday affairs of life.

7. Problems of human conduct, religion and morality were studied through a keen observation of nature and man.
8. Wisdom literature circulated widely and had an influence far beyond its place of origin.

H. Types of Wisdom Literature:

1. Practical advice on how to live a good and successful life, such as Proverbs.
2. Reflective writing that probed the meaning of life, its suffering and sorrows, such as Job and Ecclesiastes.
3. We have three inspired books of Wisdom: Job, Ecclesiastes and Proverbs.
4. Uninspired books of Wisdom are: The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, called Ecclesiasticus and The Wisdom of Solomon.

III. *Wisdom Literature Compared With Other Forms of Revelation:*

- A. The *Law* presented the commandments and claims of God to man. *Prophecy* passed judgment on human conduct in the light of God's revealed will and explained the purpose of God's dealing with men. *Wisdom* sought by observation, experience and reflection to know things in their essence and reality as they relate to God and man. (J. Davis).

- B. “The Law and Prophecy proceed *directly* from God . . . wisdom proceeds from man and is the product of his own experience and observation . . .” (J. Davis).

We would hasten to add that in the writing of our Biblical books of wisdom, God guided the authors by the Holy Spirit to give us a true and heavenly approved record of what they had learned.

- C. Prophecy and Wisdom were distinctly different methods of teaching.
1. The prophet spoke from the point of revelation; the wise man spoke from the point of reason, drawing his data from experience and observation.
 2. The prophets challenged men to hear, accept and obey God. Wise men summoned them to understand and learn. They did not demand so much as persuade and instruct.
 3. The prophet spoke from his direct experience with God. The wise man reflects the moral precepts gleaned from the world's broad experience. They spoke from their experience and accumulated learning.
 4. The wise men say little about sacrifice, temple or priesthood. They do not dwell on the covenant relationship between Israel and Jehovah. They do not address the nation as such. Rather they speak to individuals on how they should live their daily lives.

SONG OF SOLOMON – A CELEBRATION OF MARRIED LOVE

- Key Verse:* 8:7, “Many waters cannot quench love,
Neither can floods drown it . . .”
- Key Word:* Love
- Key Concept:* The beauty of married love which typifies
the love of God for his people.
- Key Persons:* Solomon, King of Israel.
Shulamite, a lovely country maiden from
Northern Israel.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

- I. *The Author:*
- A. Solomon, King of Israel (1:1). Some have argued that it is a song about Solomon rather than by him.
 - B. This is one of Solomon’s 1,005 songs (I Kings 4:32). The Hebrews judged it to be his best.
 - C. For information on Solomon’s life and achievements see the notes on Proverbs.
- II. *The Book:*
- A. Name:
 - 1. In the Hebrew Bible it is called the Song of Songs, i.e., it is superior to all other songs.
 - 2. Jerome gave it the title Canticles in his Vulgate.

B. Date:

1. It would have been composed in the earlier days of Solomon's reign, 970-950 B. C.
2. Liberal scholars who deny the Solomonic authorship date it after the 10th century B. C.

C. Purposes:

1. No specific purpose is stated in the book.
2. It celebrates the beauties and joys of married love. In this it typifies the love of God for his people.
3. It is a veiled protest against polygamy.
4. God placed it in the canon to teach us the purity and sanctity of marriage which he ordered.

D. Theme: The mutual love of Solomon and his Shulamite bride.**E. Theories of interpretation:**

1. Allegorical: The majority of interpreters through the centuries have treated it as an allegory.
 - a. Historically, the Jews from the time of Josephus have seen it depicting God and Israel.
 - b. Christians have thought it spoke of Jesus and the church.
 - c. This view is discredited by the absurdities it has produced, for example:
 - 1) "I am black but comely" (1:5) means black with sin but comely through conversion, some say.

- 2) “A bundle of myrrh that lieth between my breasts” (1:13). Some apply this to Christ between the Old and New Testaments, or the Shekinah between the two cherubim.
- 3) The “fourscore concubines” (6:8), were said to be 80 heresies that have plagued the church.
- d. It is not that the contents suggest such, but to raise it to a sufficiently high plane to justify its place in the canon, they have allegorized it.
2. Literal: This views it as:
 - a. A drama which portrays Solomon’s love for the Shulamite girl with no spiritual content.
 - b. Some propose a different dramatic setting where the Shulamite girl remains faithful to her shepherd lover despite Solomon’s invitation to romance.
 - c. It is viewed by some as a collection of love songs to be sung at a wedding festival, this with no spiritual value. They note that to this day the Syrians consider the newlywed couple a king and queen for the week of their wedding festival.
3. Typical: This view sees a literal story of

Solomon and the Shulamite's romance which illustrates the love of God for his people.

- a. Elsewhere Solomon is depicted as a type of Christ (II Sam. 7:12-17; Matt. 12:42).
 - b. God and Israel are described as husband and wife (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:14; Ezek. 16:8-14).
 - c. The church is Christ's bride (Eph. 5:22-33).
4. We will follow the typical interpretation. It is written in dramatic form to be sung. It is best understood as an operetta with dramatic scenes, speeches and songs.
- F. Helpful hints for interpreting the Song of Solomon:
1. It is poetry, not prose. We grant to poets a broad license of expression.
 2. It is Oriental poetry. Orientals revel in figures of speech at which we Westerners are shocked. There is nothing in the Song to offend the most modest Oriental.
 3. It is first of all a love poem or song; the type sung at an Eastern wedding feast.
 4. As in most ancient poems there are no indications of change of scenes or speakers. Therefore careful attention must be paid to the context to avoid confusion.
 5. It is "a pastoral poem with characters presenting quasi-dramatic action. The

addresses, instead of being dialogues are frequently sustained monologues, soliloquies or apostrophes” (S. Yoder).

6. The cast of characters includes:
 - a. Solomon the king.
 - b. Shulamite, a country maiden of northern Israel who by her beauty and purity filled Solomon with love for her and helped him see the original beauty of monogamous love in marriage.
 - c. The daughters of Jerusalem, the maiden court attendants.
 - d. Her brothers at her native home.
 7. “The book is a wedding song containing recollections of the antenuptial experiences of Solomon and Shulamite. The events mentioned are not recorded as having occurred in the order stated but depict the emotions of the lovers in times of union and separation” (J. Raven).
- G. Interesting facts about the book:
1. “The Song of Songs . . . holds . . . first place among the puzzles of literature” (Aglen). It is “the most obscure book of the Old Testament” (F. Delitzsch).
 2. The history of interpretation of this book from earliest times has been a long apology to account for its place in the canon.
 3. On the surface there is no indication within

the book of any connection with religion. God's name is mentioned only once and that indirectly.

4. No book has provoked more controversy than this.
5. Not grasping its meaning, many have questioned its right to be in the sacred canon. It claims the highest credentials for its authenticity.
6. It is the only book of the Bible with love as its sole theme.
7. It is not mentioned in the New Testament.
8. It has no direct messianic message.
9. It is one of the shortest books of the Old Testament with only 117 verses.
10. Twenty-one varieties of plants and 15 species of animals are mentioned by Solomon. He was renowned for such knowledge (I Kings 4:33).
11. During the persecutions of the Reformation period this little book provided great comfort to the victims. "It is said that there are more quotations from the Song of Songs on the tombstones of the Covenanters in Scotland than from any other book of the Bible."
12. John Gill preached 122 sermons on this book in the early 1700's.
 - a. Bernard of Claivaux wrote 86 sermons on the first two chapters being interrupted by death.

- b. Origen wrote 12 volumes on it.
 - 13. Shulamite is the feminine form of Solomon; hence we have the prince of peace and the daughter of peace.
 - H. Song of Solomon and the Hebrews:
 - 1. The Jews placed the Song among the holiest of all their books. They compared Solomon's writings to the temple: Ecclesiastes being the outer court, Proverbs being the holy place, Song of Solomon being the holy of holies.
- III. *Song of Solomon Summarized:*
 - A. The thrill of new love (1:1 - 3:5).
 - B. Rejoicing in marriage (3:6 - 5:1).
 - C. Separation and reunion (5:2 - 8:14).

OUTLINE OF SONG OF SOLOMON:

- I. *Act One - "The Mutual Love of Solomon and the Shulamite" (1:2 - 2:7):*
 - A. *First Scene:* The women's chamber of the royal palace (1:2-8):
 - 1. The bride, sings of her love for Solomon (1:2-4a):
 - a. Her attendants respond (4:4b).
 - b. The bride continues (1:5-7).
 - 2. Her female attendants encourage her to seek the king (1:8).
 - B. *Second Scene:* The royal banquet room (1:9 - 2:7).

1. Solomon praises her beauty (1:9-11).
 2. The bride recalls their pleasant meeting (1:12-14).
 3. Solomon sings his love for her (1:15).
 4. The bride sings of their place of romance (1:16 - 2:1).
 5. Solomon responds (2:2).
 6. The bride relates her emotions of love (2:3-6).
 7. The bride's refrain to her maidens (2:7).
- II. *Act Two: "The Mutual Seeking and Finding of the Lovers" (2:8 - 3:5):*
- A. *First Scene:* Back at her abode, she sings of the episode of her love (2:8-17). The bride sings of his coming to take her with him (2:8-17).
 - B. *Second Scene:* (3:1-5):
 1. The bride dreams that she had lost her lover.
 2. She searches until she finds him.
 3. Her refrain (3:5).
- III. *Act Three: "The Wedding and Nuptial Celebration" (3:6 - 5:1):*
- A. *First Scene:* (3:6-11):
 1. The bridegroom comes. The courtmaidens view it from the portals of the bride's chambers (3:6-10).
 2. The bride invites the maidens to share the joy of their vows (3:11).
 - B. *Second Scene:* (4:1 - 5:1):
 1. Solomon's love song, in the bridal chamber as they lavish their love upon one another

- (4:1-15).
- 2. The bride responds (4:16).
- 3. Solomon sings to the guest at the wedding feast (5:1).
- IV. *Act Four: "Love Separated but Reconciled Again"* (5:2 - 6:9):
 - A. *First Scene*: The bride relates her sorrowful dream to her maidens in their parlor (5:2 - 6:3):
 - 1. The bride speaks (5:2-8).
 - 2. The maidens respond (5:9).
 - 3. The bride poetically describes Solomon (5:10-16).
 - 4. The maidens question her (6:1).
 - 5. The bride responds (6:2-3).
 - B. *Second Scene*: They are reconciled (6:4-9). Solomon praises her beauty (6:4-9).
- V. *Act Five: "The Beauty of Shulamite Celebrated"* (6:10 - 8:4):
 - A. *First Scene*: The bride and her companions converse together (6:10 - 7:5):
 - 1. The maidens praise her (6:10).
 - 2. The bride muses about her family and home (6:11-12).
 - 3. The maidens urge her to stay (6:13a).
 - 4. The bride replies in modesty (6:13b).
 - 5. The maidens describe her beauty in dance (7:1-5).
 - B. *Second Scene*: Solomon and Shulamite share joy together (7:6 - 8:4):
 - 1. Solomon revels in her beauty (7:6-9).

2. The bride sings to her lover as they return to her old homeplace (7:10 - 8:3).
 3. The bride sings her refrain to her companions (8:4).
- VI. *Act Six: "The Lovers Together in the Country of Shulem (8:5-14):*
- A. *First Scene: Love pledged (8:5-7).*
 1. The maidens introduce the lovers (8:5a).
 2. Solomon reminisces as they stroll in her native community (8:5b).
 3. The bride pledges her love (8:6).
 4. Solomon responds (8:7).
 - B. *Second Scene: At her parents' home (8:8-14):*
 1. The bride sings to her brothers of the past (8:8).
 2. The brothers respond to her (8:9).
 3. The bride sings to Solomon of her purity (8:10-12).
 4. Solomon requests her to sing (8:13).
 5. The bride sings him her song (8:14).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. Love is strong as death (8:6).
2. Jealousy is cruel as Sheol (8:6).
3. Many waters cannot quench love (8:7).
4. Love cannot be bought with money (8:7).
5. Love is a divine gift from God.
6. Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled . . . (Heb.13:4)

7. As we reflect on this beautiful celebration of married love, let us remember the divine relationship we Christians share as the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:22-33).

ISAIAH – THE STATESMAN PROPHET

- Key Verses:* 30:18-19 “Therefore will Jehovah wait, that he may be gracious unto you; . . . for Jehovah is a God of justice . . .”
- Key Word:* “Salvation”. This word and its derivatives are used 32 times by the prophet.
- Key Phrases:* “The Holy One of Israel.” This and the shorter “Holy One” are used 33 times.
- Key Thought:* Israel shall be saved by Jehovah through judgment and grace.
- Key Characters:* Isaiah, the Prophet of God.
Hezekiah, descendent of David and king of the Southern Kingdom of Judah.
The coming Messianic king.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. *The Author:*

- A. It is “the vision of Isaiah, the son of Amoz” of the southern kingdom of Judah (1:1).
- B. About the author:
 - 1. Born in Jerusalem around 780 B. C.
 - 2. Tradition says his father, Amoz, was brother to King Amaziah. It seems likely he was of an aristocratic family from his access to the royal court.
 - 3. His name means “Jehovah saves.”
 - 4. His ministry extended from 750-698 B. C.

5. His call to the prophetic office came in the year that king Uzziah died (6:1).
- C. His family:
 1. His wife is called a prophetess (8:3).
 2. His two sons bore prophetic names:
 - a. Shear-jashub, a remnant shall return (7:3).
 - b. Maher-shalal-hashbaz, the spoil speeds, the prey hastens (8:3, 18).
- D. His ministry:
 1. Isaiah heads the list as the greatest of all the prophets. He is the standard by which others are measured.
 2. As a statesman, he had no equal among the prophets.
 3. As a preacher of social reform, none excelled him.
 4. No prophet “combined more perfectly than Isaiah, earthly wisdom and sagacity, courage and conviction, versatility of gifts and singleness of purpose . . . with a clear vision and spiritual intuition, a love of righteousness, and a keen appreciation of Jehovah’s majesty and holiness . . .” George Robinson.
 5. He was preeminently the Messianic prophet.
 6. He was an artist with words. “His poetic genius is superb” (Driver).
 7. He revealed the grace of God to his people.
 - a. He has been called the evangelistic prophet of the Old Testament.
 - b. “Isaiah is the St. Paul of the Old

Testament” (Robinson).

8. As were the other prophets, Isaiah was unpopular in his day.
 9. Prophets were not only *foretellers*, i.e., predictors of future events, they were primarily *forthtellers* declaring God’s will to their generation.
- E. In II Chron. 32:32 we are told that Isaiah prepared a biography of King Hezekiah.
- F. Concerning his death, nothing is known for sure. Jewish tradition has him martyred under King Manasseh, being sawn into.

II. *The Background of Isaiah’s Work:*

- A. His ministry spanned the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah and Manasseh; approximately 750-698 B. C.
- B. Contemporary prophets with him were Amos and Hosea in the Northern Kingdom and Micah in Judah. While Isaiah served in the King’s court, Micah preached in the country-side.
- C. The reigns of Uzziah and Jeroboam II were years of great prosperity and relative peace. Judah was making military preparation.
- D. The upper strata of society lived indulgent, extravagant, sensual lives, while the masses lived in abject poverty. Land grabbing and oppression of the poor were major problems.
- E. Four great political crises marked his ministry:
1. The Syro-Ephramitic War, 735-732. Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Damascus conspired against Ahaz of Judah to depose him and

place “the son of Tabeel” on his throne. Ahaz appealed to Tiglath-pileser of Assyria who captured Damascus in 732 and took all of Israel east of Jordan and north of Mt. Carmel. See II Kings 15:37 - 16:9 for background.

2. The fall of Samaria in 722 B. C. Shalmanezzer IV of Assyria besieged Samaria three years in the reign of Hoshea. Upon Shalmanezzer’s death, Sargon, his commander-in-chief seized the Assyrian throne and took Samaria.
 - a. He deported 27,280 of Israel’s most prominent citizens.
 - b. See II Kings 17:1-6.
3. The siege of Ashdod in 711 B. C. brought the Assyrians right into Judah’s heart-land. See Isaiah 20:1-6.
4. The invasion of Judah by Sennacherib of Assyria in 701 B. C.:
 - a. He captured 46 fortified cities, took 200,150 captives and laid siege to Jerusalem.
 - b. An angel of the Lord smote 185,000 of his troops at Jerusalem’s gates, driving him away.
 - c. See II Kings 18:13 - 19:36.
- F. In Isaiah’s generation Rome, Athens and Sparta were founded (750-700 B. C.).
- G. In Egypt the twenty-third, twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth dynasties reigned. Many of the

small kingdoms looked to Egypt for military assistance against Assyria.

- H. Religious conditions were intolerable. Idolatry was rampant in Judah and Israel. Lifeless ritual was the order of the day. Religious leaders had compromised themselves. The true worship of Jehovah was syncritized with pagan practices. Morals and ethics were at a low ebb.

III. *About the Book:*

- A. It bears the name of its illustrious author.
- B. Literary qualities:
 - 1. From the literary standpoint, it is unexcelled.
 - 2. It stands at the head of all books of prophecy.
 - 3. His style marked the high point of Hebrew literary art. No other Old Testament writer uses so many beautiful, picturesque illustrations.
 - 4. The style is poetic except for chapters 36 - 39.
- C. Isaiah and the New Testament:
 - 1. It is quoted in the New Testament 308 times, more than any other Old Testament book.
 - 2. It is more like the New Testament in its message than any other Old Testament book.
 - 3. Nowhere else in the Old Testament have we such a clear view of God's grace.
 - 4. It has been called "the fifth evangelist"

and “the Gospel according to Isaiah.”

D. Purposes:

1. To correct, reprove and admonish the Hebrews of his day.
2. To reveal coming judgment on the nation's heathen neighbors for evils done to the people of God.
3. To declare and explain the redemptive plan of Jehovah for Israel and all nations.
4. To prepare God's people for the coming Babylonian captivity.
5. To teach the Hebrews that salvation would come only from God - not man. Therefore, no alliances should be made with neighboring nations.

E. Isaiah and the liberal critics:

1. His book has been subjected to severe attack by skeptical scholars for 200 years:
 - a. In 1780 J. B. Koppe first challenged the unity of the book.
 - b. George Adam Smith popularized this theory in the *Expositor's Bible Commentary*.
2. These critics do not generally accept the total inspiration of the Scriptures. They have difficulty reconciling the miraculous predictive element of Isaiah with their views.
3. The most radical of the critics would concede only 262 of the 1292 verses of the book to the 8th century prophet, Isaiah.
4. The two major theories are:

- a. Deutero-Isaiah: This theory argues for two authors. Our traditional Isaiah wrote the first 30 chapters and an unknown writer penned chapters 40-66 during the Babylonian exile (549-536 B. C.).
 - b. Trito-Isaiah: This view grants the first 39 chapters to the 8th century Isaiah, but limits Deutero-Isaiah to chapters 40-55. Chapters 55-66 were allegedly composed by a Trito-Isaiah about 460-455 B. C.
5. To deny the unity of authorship of Isaiah denies:
- a. The statement of 1:1 which declares Isaiah the son of Amoz to be the author of all that follows.
 - b. The internal evidence which suggests the writer was a Jew of Palestine very familiar with the environs of Jerusalem and Judea.
 - c. The evidence of statements made in the latter chapters which could not have been written in the Babylonian exile period. They indicate the walls of Jerusalem were yet standing (62:6).
 - d. The testimony of 2500 years of Jewish and Christian acceptance of Isaiah's authorship.
 - e. The New Testament's witness to

Isaiah's authorship. In John 12:38-41 both sections of Isaiah are cited and attributed to him.

6. For a thorough refutation of these false theories, see *Getting Acquainted With the Old Testament*, Vol. II by Charles Pledge and *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* by Gleason Archer, Jr.
7. The differences in style can be accounted for on the basis of his long and varied career. Rather than two authors, it is one man with two messages.

F. Miscellaneous facts about the book:

1. That Isaiah is the first of the major prophets refers to the size, not the content of his book.
2. The materials of Isaiah are grouped together topically rather than chronologically.
3. The great Isaiah scroll found in the caves of Qumran was 24 feet long. It dates from the 2nd century B. C.
4. Isaiah is a miniature Bible: 66 chapters, two great divisions, 1-39 and 40-66. The first deals with law, sin and judgment, the second with Messiah, grace, forgiveness and redemption.
5. Isaiah contains the most complete unfolding of the gospel in the Old Testament. It has been called the gospel before the gospel.

6. No book of the Old Testament has suffered more from “commentary abuse” than Isaiah.

G. What great men have said about Isaiah:

1. Richard Moulton: “It may be safely asserted that nowhere else in the literature of the world have so many colossally great ideas been brought together within the limits of a single work.”
2. Edmund Burke, the celebrated British orator commonly read Isaiah before going into Parliament.
3. Nearly a third of the lyrics of Handel’s Messiah are taken from Isaiah.

IV. *A Simple Analysis of Isaiah:*

- A. Prophetic section with mainly local application (chapters 1-35).
- B. Historical section concerning Judah in Hezekiah’s day (chapters 36-39).
- C. Prophetic section concerning future matters relating to Israel, Messiah and his kingdom (chapters 40-66).

V. *Appendices:*

- A. A historical chronology for Isaiah and his times.
- B. Neighboring kings who impacted on Isaiah’s Israel.
- C. The four different servants of God in Isaiah.
- D. The virgin birth of Christ.

OUTLINE OF ISAIAH: Introduction (1:1).

I. *Prophecies Concerning Judah and Israel (1:2 - 12:6):*

- A. The sin of rebellion cannot be hidden by outward religious forms (1:2-31).
 - B. Present chastisement will result in future glory (2:1-42):
 1. Messiah's coming kingdom (2:1-4).
 2. A day of Jehovah will come on the wicked (2:5 - 4:1).
 3. Restoration will follow exile (4:2-6).
 - C. God's judgment on his wicked people (5:1-30):
 1. Parable of the vineyard (5:1-7).
 2. Sins that destroy a nation (5:8-23).
 3. Coming punishment (5:24-30).
 - D. Isaiah's appointment to the prophetic office (6:1-13).
 - E. The coming Messiah, Judah's true hope (7:1-9:7):
 1. The historical background (7:1-9).
 2. The virgin's son a promise of deliverance (7:10-25).
 3. They will be delivered from Assyria because God is with them (8:1-22).
 4. God will turn darkness to light by the coming Messiah (9:1-7).
 - F. The unescapable doom of Samaria (9:8 - 10:4).
 - G. God will destroy the evil empire of Assyria (10:5-34).
 - H. The coming Messiah will gather the remnant into his kingdom (11:1 - 12:6).
- II. *Oracles Concerning Nations Whose Destinies Affect Israel (13:1 - 23:18):*
- A. Babylon will be destroyed (13:1 - 14:23).

- B. Assyria will be broken in Judah (14:24-27).
- C. Philistia will be exterminated (14:28-32).
- D. Moab will be devastated (15:1 - 16:14).
- E. Damascus will be ruined (17:1-3).
- F. Assyria will swallow up the Northern Kingdom of Israel, only to be destroyed by God (17: 4-14).
- G. Burden against Ethiopia and Egypt (18:1- 20:6):
 - 1. Judah must look to Jehovah, not Ethiopia for help (18:1-7).
 - 2. God will judge Egypt, but later bless her (19:1-25).
 - 3. Those who look to Ethiopia and Egypt for help against Assyria will be dismayed (20: 1-6).
- H. Babylon will be destroyed by Media (21:1-10).
- I. Edom and Arabia will suffer (21:11-17).
- J. Judah's unpardonable sin (22:1-14).
- K. A message against Shebna the palace mayor (22: 15-25).
- L. Tyre will be laid waste by Babylon (23:1-18).
- III. *God's Sovereign Power Seen in Salvation and Judgment (24:1 - 27:13):*
 - A. The terrible judgment to come (24:1-23).
 - B. Judah will praise God when he destroys their enemies (25:1-12).
 - C. The hymn of deliverance the captives will sing when set free (26:1-21).
 - D. God will punish the oppressor and preserve the righteous (27:1-13).

- IV. *A Series of Warnings That Deliverance Will Be Found in Jehovah, Not in Egypt (28:1 - 35:10):*
 - A. Woe to the Northern Kingdom for their sins (28:1-6).
 - B. Woe to Judah's leaders who sought refuge in an alliance with Egypt (28:7-29).
 - C. Judgment will come upon those in Jerusalem who tried to deceive God (29:1-24).
 - D. Woe to Judah's leaders who made the covenant with Egypt (30:1-17).
 - E. Judah will be delivered from Assyria by Jehovah (30:18-33).
 - F. Only calamity will come from trusting Egypt (31:1-9).
 - G. In coming days righteousness shall prevail and repentance will be made for sin (32:1-19):
 1. The coming righteous king (32:1-8).
 2. He rebukes the careless women (32:9-20).
 - H. Wicked Assyria shall be punished and Zion delivered (33:1-24).
 - I. God will take vengeance on all of Israel's enemies (34:1-17).
 - J. Mingled restoration and Messianic promises (35:1-10).
- V. *A Historical Record of Events in Hezekiah's Reign (36:1 - 39:8):*
 - A. The destruction of Jerusalem averted (36:1-37:38):
 1. Ràbshakeh's call for surrender (36:1-22).
 2. Hezekiah's response (37:1-20).
 3. God's promise to deliver the city (37:

21-35).

4. The Assyrian army destroyed by God's angel (37:36-38).

B. Hezekiah's illness and recovery (38:1-22):

1. The solemn announcement and his prayerful response (38:1-8).
2. His hymn of thanksgiving (38:9-20).
3. The treatment prescribed (38:21-22).

C. Episode with the ambassador from Babylon (39:1-8). The Babylonian captivity announced (39:6-8).

VI. *Prophecies of Comfort Written for Exiles in Babylon Promising Salvation and Restoration (40:1 - 48:22):*

- A. Jehovah the majestic comforter (40:1-31).
- B. Jehovah proves his deity by his power of prediction (41:1-29).
- C. Jehovah will redeem his people from captivity (42:1 - 43:28).
- D. Jehovah's ability to bless contrasted with the inability of idols (44:1-23).
- E. God has appointed Cyrus to deliver them from Babylon (44:24 - 45:25).
- F. Babylon, their oppressor, will be overthrown (46:1 - 47:15).
- G. Unfaithful Israel rebuked (48:1-22).

VII. *Oracles About the Prince of Peace (49:1 - 57:21):*

- A. Messiah will bring restoration to Israel and light to the Gentiles (49:1 - 50:3).
- B. Israel's sinfulness contrasted with the servant's obedience (50:4-11).
- C. God speaks words of comfort and promise to his

suffering people (51:1 - 52:12).

- D. God's suffering servant shall be exalted (52:13-53:12):
 - 1. The servant's destiny (52:13-15). The servant is Messiah (Acts 8:32-35).
 - 2. The servant's career (53:1-3).
 - 3. His suffering (53:4-6).
 - 4. His submission (53:7-9).
 - 5. His reward (53:10-12).
- E. Jerusalem and God's servants will be glorified (54:1-13).
- F. Grace will be extended to all who seek Jehovah (55:1-13).
- G. Gentiles as well as Jews will be blest in Messiah's day (56:1-8).
- H. Condemnation of Israel's wicked rulers (56:9-57:21).

VIII. *Program of Peace* (58:1 - 66:24):

- A. True and false worship contrasted (58:1-14).
- B. Confession of sin will bring God's deliverance (59:1-21).
- C. The peace and glorious prosperity of the redeemed (60:1-22).
- D. Messiah's mission (61:1-11).
- E. Zion will be restored and glorified (62:1 - 63:6).
- F. A prayer for mercy, pardon and renewal (63:7-64:12).
- G. God's future blessings for spiritual Israel (65:1-25).
- H. Heartless ritual will be replaced by genuine worship in Messiah's day (66:1-24).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

- A. Correct worship without corresponding holy living is an insult to God (1:11-17).
- B. The church of Christ was not an afterthought; Isaiah vividly described it 700 years beforehand (2:2-4).
- C. A day of Jehovah will come upon all the proud and haughty sinners (2:12).
- D. Woe to them that rise up early to follow strong drink (5:11).
- E. People are destroyed for lack of knowledge (5:13).
- F. The Lord is still asking "Who will go for us, whom shall I send?" (6:8).
- G. The virgin did conceive and bear a son. He was Immanuel, God with us (7:14).
- H. Jesus was a child born, yet he is the mighty God (9:6).
- I. Woe to them that write unrighteous decrees (10:1).
- J. God uses wicked nations to punish others, then destroys them for their aggression (10:5-19).
- K. In Christ those who were vicious as wolves will live peaceably with those as harmless as little children (11:6-9).
- L. God intends that we drink from the well of salvation with joy (12:3).
- M. Isaiah foresaw all nations worshipping together in the Christian age (19:24-25).
- N. God will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind

- is stayed on him (26:3).
- O. Sin leaves a man on a bed too short with cover, too narrow (28:10).
- P. It is a tragic day when God's message is a sealed book to his people (29:11).
- Q. Woe to them that say to God's prophets, "prophesy not" (30:10).
- R. Jehovah will wait that he may be gracious unto us (30:18).
- S. Seek ye out of the book of Jehovah, and read (34:16).
- T. Like Hezekiah, we need to take our problems to the Lord in prayer (36:14ff).
- U. What have they seen in your house? (39:4).
- V. They that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength (40:31).
- W. It pleased Jehovah to magnify his law and make it honorable (42:21).
- X. There is no Savior but Jehovah (43:11).
- Y. As a thick cloud he blots out our transgressions (44:22).
- Z. God formed the earth and made it (45:18).
- AA. When we obey God, we have peace like a river (48:18).
- BB. Messiah was wounded for our transgressions, with his stripes we are healed (53:5).
- CC. There is no peace, saith God, to the wicked (57:21).
- DD. Iniquity separates men from God (59:27).

APPENDIX A
A Chronological Table for Isaiah

B. C.	ca 765	Isaiah born
	789 - 740	Uzziah
	784 - 745	Jeroboam II
	745 - 727	Tiglath-pileser III
	740	The Call of Isaiah
	740 - 736	Jotham (sole reign)
	738	Arpad, Calno, Carchemish and Damascus taken by Tiglath-pileser III
	745 - 737	Menahem
	737 - 736	Pekahiah
	736 - 730	Pekah
	736 - 727	Ahaz
	734	Syro-Ephraimitic war; Gaza captured by Tiglath-pileser III; Galilee and Gilead also carried captive to Assyria
	732	Damascus taken by Tiglath-pileser III
	730 - 722	Hoshea
	727 - 699	Hezekiah
	727 - 722	Shalmaneser IV
	722	Fall of Samaria; end of the kingdom of North Israel
	722 - 705	Sargon II
	721 - 709	Babylonia independent under Mero-dach-Baladan
	720	Battle of Karkar; Sargon II conquers Arpad, Hamath and Damascus; Battle of Raphia; Sargon II conquers Hanno

- of Gaza; King So of Egypt flees
- 717 Sargon II conquers the Hittites, capturing Carchemish, their capital; annexing also Media to his empire
- 714 Hezekiah's sickness
- 712 Merodach-Baladan's embassy to Hezekiah.
- 712 - 700 Shabaka, founder of twenty-fifth dynasty in Egypt
- 711 Siege of Ashdod by Sargon II
- 709 Merodach-Baladan expelled from Babylonia by Sargon II
- 705 - 681 Sennacherib
- 703 Merodach-Baladan again king (six months) over Babylonia
- 701 Siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib; Judah, Moab, Edom, Ammon and Philistia made to pay tribute; Tirhakah (afterwards "king of Ethiopia") head of the Egyptian army under Shabaka
- 699 - 643 Manasseh, king of Judah

APPENDIX B

*Neighboring Kings Who Impacted on Isaiah's Israel*I. *Kings of Assyria:*

- A. Tiglath-pileser III, 745-727 B. C.; also called Pul in Scripture. He utilized deportation as a war strategy. In Jotham's day he captured Arpad, Calno, Carchemish and Damascus.
- B. Shalmaneser IV, 727-722 B. C. He besieged Samaria, but died before taking it. He is called Shalman in the Bible.
- C. Sargon II, 722-705 B. C. He was commander-in-chief of Shalmaneser. Upon his superior's death, Sargon seized the throne of Assyria. He took Samaria and deported 27,280 Israelites.
- D. Sennacherib, 705-681 B. C. He invaded Palestine, forcing Judah, Moab, Edom, Ammon and Philistia to pay tribute. His army was smitten and destroyed by the Lord's angel, outside of Jerusalem. He fled to his home.

II. *Kings of Egypt:*

- A. So, king of Egypt, made an alliance with Hoshea of Samaria in 724 B. C. which resulted in his fall.
- B. Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia and Egypt, offered feeble assistance to Judah against the Assyrians in 701 B. C. Was later defeated and killed by the Assyrians.

III. *Syria:*

- A. Rezin, king of Syria, formed an alliance with

Pekah of Samaria against Ahaz of Judah. He was defeated by the Assyrians.

IV. *Babylon:*

- A. Merodach-baladan, ruler of Babylon who visited Hezekiah in 712 B. C. to spy out his kingdom.

APPENDIX C

The Four Different Servants of God in Isaiah

To properly understand a passage, it is essential to identify who is spoken of. Such a case is the word *servant* which has four usages in Isaiah.

A. *Israel:*

- 1. 41:8 "Israel my servant."
- 2. 43:10

B. *Isaiah:*

- 1. 20:3

C. *Messiah:*

- 1. 42:1 "Behold my servant, whom I uphold . . . I have put my spirit upon him. . ."
- 2. 52:13 - 53:12

D. *Christians:*

- 1. 65:15 "he will call his servants by another name."

APPENDIX D
The Virgin Birth of Christ

“What think ye of the Christ? Whose son is he? (Matt. 22:42). The Christian religion is built upon the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (Matt. 16:18); that he was born, not as you or I, but of a virgin by the power of God without a human father. Enemies of Christ have worked unceasingly to discredit this foundation doctrine. The most shocking fact is that many Protestant theologians and ministers are carrying Satan’s flag. For example, this statement by Martin Rist, professor at Denver’s Iliff School of Theology, “Belief in the Virgin Birth is now untenable.”¹ The Very Rev. James A. Pike, late Protestant Episcopal bishop of California, said, “the Virgin Birth is a myth.”²

Are we who believe Jesus was the virgin born Son of God, justified in our faith? Let us examine the facts to see why we believe.

I. *We look first to the Old Testament prophecies of the incarnation of Jesus and the virgin birth.* These prophecies are windows through which God admits light on future events.

A. God said to Satan, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, and he shall bruise thy head and

¹ Denver Post, (Feb. 4, 1961).

² Time Magazine, (Feb. 24, 1961).

thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:15). The Lord here promises that the seed, the child of the woman, shall destroy the devil, though he shall suffer at Satan’s hands before his victory. The seed of the *woman*: nothing is said of the man! As the woman was first to sin, a woman also brought salvation into the world. Paul later wrote that “When the fulness of time came, God sent forth his son, born of a woman . . .” (Gal. 4:4).

- B. Seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, the Messianic prophet wrote, “Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign; behold a *virgin shall conceive*, and *bear a son*, and shall call his name Immanuel, *which means God with us*” (Isa. 7:14). By giving the world a virgin born Messiah, God eliminated the possibility that a counterfeit Messiah could establish himself. Only the virgin born would be able to lay claim to this office. Matthew quotes this verse as confirmation of his record of the birth of Christ (Matt. 1: 22-23).
- C. Isaiah wrote “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom . . .” (Isa. 9:6-7). The King would be human, a child born of the lineage of David, yet he would be divine because he was called mighty God and Everlasting

Father.

Micah foretold of a ruler in Israel whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting (Micah 5:2). Long before the babe was born, the Lord who came to live in that body had executed his work as the Word of God.

II. *Now we turn to the New Testament to hear the testimony of those witnesses.*

- A. Luke tells us "the angel Gabriel was sent from God . . . to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph . . . and the angel said unto her, 'Fear not Mary; for thou hast found favor with God.' And behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High . . . And Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, *seeing I know not a man?* And the angel answered and said unto her, the Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:26-38). Here Mary testifies that she was a virgin. The angel also foretold the sex of the child. Dr. D. M. Blair of the Medical Faculty of the University of London observed that "The only circumstantial account of the virgin birth of our Lord is found in the one Gospel written by a medical man."³ Luke's record is that of a

³Smith, Wilbur, *The Supernaturalness of Christ*, Boston, W. A. Wilde Co., 1954, p. 102.

physician and historian who had traced all things accurately from the beginning (Luke 1:1-3). The historicity of his writings have been confirmed.

- B. Matthew records “Now the birth of Jesus was on this wise: When his mother, Mary, had been betrothed to Joseph, *before* they came together she was found with child of the Holy Spirit . . . When Joseph was about to put her away privily, . . . an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream saying, Joseph thou Son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit . . . and Joseph . . . did as the Lord commanded him, and took unto him his wife and knew her not till she had brought forth a son” (Matt. 1:18-25). The genealogy in Matt. 1:1-16 traces all the fathers who begat the sons in the family tree except in the case of Joseph. It is not said that Joseph begat Jesus, but that he was born of Mary. The earthly father’s name is omitted and the mother’s substituted.
- C. Jesus himself taught that he was the “true bread of life *sent down from heaven*” (John 6:32-38) and in numerous cases he asserted that he was divine and no mere man!
- D. Paul wrote, that God declared Christ to be the *Son of God* with power (Rom. 1:4) and again that, “God was manifested in the flesh . . .” (I Tim. 3:16 KJV). There is no dispute about the language used to declare the doctrine, it is either true or false. A chain is no stronger than its

weakest link. If the Scriptures are untrustworthy in the matter of the virgin birth, we cannot trust them anywhere.

- E. The following Christian leaders testify in writings still extant, that the church of the second century believed in the virgin birth—Aristides, Iranenaues, Tertullian, Justin Martyr and Ignatius. Ignatius of the church in Antioch of Syria who died in 117 A. D., wrote that they were, “fully persuaded as touching our Lord, that He was truly of the race of David according to the flesh, but Son of God by the Divine Will and power, truly born of a virgin and baptized by John . . .” (Letter to Smyrna 1:1-2).

III. *Things Dependent upon the Virgin Birth:* The Modernist who denies the virgin birth glibly assures us that this does not weaken the position of the Christian faith. It is significant that the atheist who rejects the scriptural account of the virgin birth views such as a total overthrow of Christ’s claims to deity. Paul said, by their fair words and smooth speech they deceive the hearts of the innocent (Rom. 16:18). Consider the following:

- A. Jesus is either divine as pictured in the Bible or else he was one of the biggest imposters the world has ever seen. If he were born naturally as the liberals say, then we should apologize to the Jews and admit they were right when they accused him of blasphemy for making himself equal with God (John 5:18; 10:33)!
- B. His Lordship: Time and again Jesus is referred to

as Lord, yet the word *Lord* in both the Old and New Testaments has to do with “The Supreme Being or God of the Universe.” If he were human born, he cannot be Lord. Grant his deity and all difficulties with the virgin birth disappear. In a person so supernatural, the virgin birth is the very way one would expect him to enter our world.

- C. The Saviorhood of Jesus. His name means he shall save his people from their sins (Matt. 1:21). *No mere man* can save himself, much less anyone else, because he is in the same quicksand of sin. Jesus can save us because he is divine. He has all power of God at his hand and he was sinless (Matt. 28:18; I Peter 2:22). But this too, demands his virgin birth.
- D. The Bodily Resurrection: Has any ordinary man ever been raised from the dead never to die again? Jesus was, but he was no ordinary man. He was God in the flesh, virgin born. “He who violently wrenches the narratives of the virgin birth from the New Testament in order to be consistent, must also uniformly expunge all other miracles and with them the atoning death, the resurrection, the ascension, and the present mediatorial office of our Lord . . .”⁴
- E. The second coming of Jesus cannot be if he were only human born. For he surely died and today his dust is mingled with the soil of Palestine if he

⁴Kelly, Dr. H. A., as quoted in Wilbur Smith, *op cited*, p. 101.

were mere man. But the virgin born, divine man has the power to come again.

- F. If he is but a human, born of an earthly father, then he could not atone for our sins on the cross.
 - G. If Christ is not the Word of God come down to earth, born of the virgin Mary, then we can have no hope for a resurrection and life after this life.
 - H. If Jesus was not virgin born, then either he was the production of pre-marital fornication on the part of Joseph and Mary, or the illegitimate son of some unknown father!
 - I. To reject the virgin birth as unscientific because it is so obviously a miracle would force us to also reject the whole Bible, God and Christ! All stand or fall together miraculous!
 - J. The man who cannot accept the supernatural birth of Christ will find it virtually impossible to be a soul-winner for the Lord. He may quote Jesus and eulogize him, but he can never be zealous to present him to the world as the apostles did. He cannot answer the questions that sinners will ask.
- IV. *The men who "deny the virgin birth*, who do so that they may the more easily be delivered from carrying the baggage of the miraculous, who shift the fatherhood of Jesus from the eternal God to the act of some sinful man are paying a dear price for their jaunty endeavor to accommodate the supernaturalism of Christianity to the poverty smitten weakness of their own faith, and the noisy clamor of an

unbelieving, spiritually ignorant and scoffing world.”⁵ Jesus the pre-existent Christ, lived from the beginning with the Father. He himself was the great creator and is the great sustainer of all things. Christ, the creator, through the virgin birth, became flesh and took the form of a created being. Through this supernatural birth Christ (who is God) became man without ceasing to be God. Jehovah brought Eve into the world from the body of a man without a mother. He brought Jesus into the world from a woman without a human father. Even as the Lord’s divine nature had no mother, so his human nature had no father.

Not one shred of evidence has been brought to light, either out of the earth or from the monuments or from the shelves of old libraries to disprove this doctrine. Not one single fact has been discovered by telescope or by the microscope, or the spectroscope, or any other instrument of science; nor one scientilla of evidence has been found either in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, to invalidate the historical integrity of the virgin birth of Christ. It is true that no one else has been born in such a miraculous manner, but remember there has never been another Christ born! There is nothing incredible in a supernatural being coming into the world in a supernatural way.

The modernists are like Hymenaeus and Alexander: they have made shipwreck concerning the faith and they overthrow the faith of some. Those who still believe in God and (the Bible) should rise up in holy indignation and drive them out of their sanctuaries. If men wish to be atheists, let them leave the churches to be so!

⁵Haldemen, I. M., as quoted in *Seven Questions in Dispute*, Wm. J. Bryan, New York Revel, 1924.

JEREMIAH – THE REBEL PROPHET

- Key Verses:** 3:12-13 “. . . Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith Jehovah . . . only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou has transgressed against Jehovah . . .”
6:16 “. . . stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein . . .”
31:3 “. . . yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.”
- Key Words:** Backsliding/backslider, used 13 times.
Forsake/forsaken, used 24 times.
Return, used 47 times.
- Key Phrase:** “Thus saith the Lord,” used 15 times.
- Key Thought:** Judah must pay for her sins by defeat and exile at the hands of Babylon.
- Key Characters:** Jeremiah, God’s faithful prophet.
Baruch, his devoted secretary.
Jehoiakim, a wicked king of Judah who contributed to her downfall. He died in disgrace.
Zedekiah, Judah’s last king who at times wished to do better but lacked the moral strength to do so. Under his reign Judah fell to Babylon’s troops.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. *The Author:*

- A. It is “the words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah” of Anathoth (1:1).
 - 1. “Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of Jehovah . . . upon a roll of a book” (36:4).
 - 2. Baruch was his personal secretary.
- B. About the author:
 - 1. He was born about 650-645 B. C.
 - 2. At Anathoth, a small priestly village some 3-4 miles northeast of Jerusalem in the territory of Benjamin.
 - 3. His father was Hilkiah, a priest (1:1).
 - 4. He was likely of the priestly line of Abithar who was deposed and disgraced by Solomon (I Kings 2:26).
 - 5. His name means “Jehovah hath appointed” or “whom Jehovah sends forth.”
 - 6. His personality was timid, sensitive and emotional. He was the weeping prophet, not because of weakness or fear, but because of compassion and sorrows.
 - 7. He belonged to the upper class and had the respect of princes and nobles.
 - 8. That he was able to have a personal secretary and buy property indicates that he was a man of means.
 - 9. His knowledge of history, political life, the earlier Scripture and Egyptian religion indicates a broad and thorough education.
 - 10. He never married.

11. More is known about Jeremiah than any other Old Testament prophet.
- C. His ministry:
1. He was called to his prophetic mission at an early age (likely about 21 years).
 2. Jeremiah no doubt encouraged Josiah's national reformation.
 3. As a preacher he was bold and daring, uncompromising in his message, yet he was sensitive to the spiritual needs of his people. He was a rebel against the false religion, governmental corruption and moral degeneracy of his day.
 4. His message was that God was going to give the nation into the hands of the Babylonians and that none should resist.
 5. He was a master at using object lessons in his preaching (see chapters 13, 19, 24).
 6. He was "the best hated man" in the kingdom.
 - a. He was rejected by his family, townsmen and nation.
 - b. He was imprisoned several times, beaten, placed in stocks and assaulted with intent to kill.
 - c. He was a man of strife and contention (15:10).
 7. Tragically he preached to deaf ears and received only hate in return for his great love.
- D. Tertullion relates an ancient tradition that he was stoned to death in Egypt. Jewish tradition

says he escaped to Babylon and died there.

II. *The Times:*

- A. While true of all books, it is especially true that one must have a knowledge of the historical background to comprehend this book.
- B. The prophet was born about 650-645 B. C. and lived till about 575-560 B. C. His public career lasted some 40-45 years.
- C. Internationally:
 - 1. In his early years Assyria was dominant but rapidly declining. Assyria had destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 B. C.
 - 2. In 612 Nineveh fell to the combined forces of the Babylonians, Medes and Scythians.
 - 3. The contest for world power was between the Babylonians and Egyptians. The Babylonians won at the Battle of Carchemish, 605 B. C. (46:1-2).
- D. In Judah:
 - 1. Josiah had come to the throne in 641 B. C. while only a child of 8 years.
 - a. In 623 an accidental discovery of the book of God's law prompted Josiah to launch a religious reformation (II Kings 22:3 - 23:25).
 - b. Josiah reigned until about 609 when he met death in a battle with the Egyptians at Megiddo (II Kings 23:29).
 - 2. The people placed Jehoahaz, his son, on the throne (II Kings 23:30-33). After three months he was deposed by Pharaoh Necho

of Egypt.

3. Egypt then placed Jehoiakim another son of Josiah on Judah's throne. He reigned from about 609-598 (II Kings 23:34-37). His wickedness was denounced by Jeremiah (22:13-19).
 4. In 605 Nebuchadnezzar became king of Babylon.
 5. In 606 and again in 598 the Babylonians invaded Judah.
 6. In 598 Jehoiakim died and was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin. After 3 months Jehoiachin surrendered the city of Babylon and he along with many others was exiled to Chaldea.
 7. The Babylonians placed Zedekiah, a third son of Josiah on the throne in 598 B. C. He was generally sympathetic to Jeremiah.
 8. Zedekiah tried to rebel against Babylon with Egypt's promised help but was sieged and defeated by Babylon in 587-586 B. C. Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed and the remaining citizens deported.
 9. Gedaliah was appointed governor of the territory but was soon assassinated by rebellious Jews (41:1-3).
 10. The assassins and their group fled to Egypt, forcibly taking the aged prophet along (43:5-7).
- E. Religiously:
1. Josiah's efforts to reform the spiritual life of

- the nation had faded with his untimely death.
2. Jeremiah felt that the reform had primarily affected the outer life, not the hearts of the people (3:10).
 3. It seems the Hebrews worshipped Jehovah in the same way their Caananite neighbors worshipped Baal.
 4. In Jeremiah's day the temple had become a "safety fetish" to the citizens of Judah. They thought the presence of the temple guaranteed the inviolability of Zion (7:8-15).
 5. It is important to remember that the Jews never ceased to worship God – they simply took up the worship and lifestyle of Baalism along with their Jehovah worship.
 - a. This practice is called syncretism.
 - b. See 7:8-10.
 6. Following Josiah's death and the rise of the pro-Egyptian faction in the nation, Jeremiah's reception changed.
 - a. His temple sermon well-nigh brought his arrest (26:1-24).
 - b. It seems he was forbidden to enter the temple grounds from this point (609 B. C.).
 - c. Thus he sent Baruch to read his sermons to the people (36:5-8).
- F. Jeremiah's contemporaries were Huldah, Habakkuk and Zephaniah in Judah and Ezekiel and Daniel among the captives in Babylon.
- G. Three military crises that affected Jeremiah's

ministry:

1. The Battle of Megiddo between Judah and Egypt (609 B. C.).
 - a. King Josiah sought to block Pharoah Necho's attempt to aid Assyria against Babylon.
 - b. Josiah was killed; Egypt assumed control of Judah.
 - c. See II Kings 23:28-30.
2. The Battle of Carchemish (605 B. C.).
 - a. Babylon defeated Egypt and gained control of Syria and Judah.
 - b. Many Jews were deported to Babylon.
 - c. II Kings 24:1-3.
3. The fall of Jerusalem in 586 B. C.
 - a. Babylonian troops sieged the city for some 18 months.
 - b. They captured and burned it (II Kings 25:1-12).
 - c. Most of her survivors were deported to Babylon.
- H. A century of great religious leaders. In the sixth century B. C. several notable religious leaders were born:
 1. Gautama Buddha in India (570 B. C.).
 2. Confucius in China (about 551 B. C.).
 3. Zoroaster in Persia (his birth date is disputed).
 4. Lao-tzu, founder of Taoism.
- I. For a historical review of Jeremiah's times, read:
 1. II Kings 22-25.
 2. II Chronicles 34-36.

III. *About the Book:*

- A. It bears the name of its author and principal character.
- B. It is essential to note that the book is not arranged in chronological order.
 - 1. This causes great confusion if not observed.
 - 2. Contents are arranged topically rather than by chronology.
- C. To appreciate the book we must view it as an anthology or collection of his writings rather than as a modern volume.
- D. We have a second edition of the book, the first being burned by king Jehoiakim (36:19-26).
 - 1. See 36:27-32.
 - 2. In addition to the original manuscript, “there were added besides unto them many like words” (36:32).
- E. The book contains history, autobiography, biography, poetry and prophecy.
 - 1. Chapters 1-20 generally refer to Jeremiah in the first person.
 - 2. Chapters 21-52 are usually in the third person, i. e., about Jeremiah.
 - 3. Some suggest that this is from Baruch’s point of view.
- F. Jeremiah and the New Testament: There are some 40 quotes or allusions from Jeremiah in the New Testament; 20 in Revelation.
- G. Jeremiah and the Septuagint:
 - 1. The Greek text of Jeremiah is one-eighth shorter than the Hebrew (some 2700 words).

2. It's arrangement is noticeably different than the Hebrew, especially the section to foreign nations (chapters 46-51).

H. Purposes:

1. At first he hoped to turn the people back to God so disaster could be averted (3:12-13).
2. Failing in that he sought to prepare the people for the coming judgment their sins demanded (27:1-11).
3. He dedicated himself to exposing the hypocrisy and lies of false priests and prophets (28:1-17).
4. He sought to help the Jews during the captivity in Babylon by words of comfort and hope (30:8-11).
5. He announced the coming Messiah and his new covenant (23:5-6; 31:31-34).

I. His message:

1. His message was directed to the people of Judah during the period of Babylonian domination and her fall, but its Messianic content makes it of great interest to us as well.
2. He was a messenger of doom, announcing that Jerusalem would fall.
3. He also was a messenger of hope, reminding that God would save the faithful remnant.
4. He thus preached the certainty of God's judgment because of sin and the tenderness and eternity of God's love.

J. Jeremiah and the liberal critics:

1. As with other books, the liberals deny the integrity and authenticity of Jeremiah.
 2. The more radical critics only concede that he wrote about a third of the text. The rest they assign to Baruch and others.
 3. For a discussion and refutation of their views see:
 - a. R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*.
 - b. E. J. Young, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*.
- K. Miscellaneous facts about the book:
1. From the concept of Jeremiah as a “weeping prophet” came our English word jeremiad which means a doleful lament or complaint.
 2. Chapter 52 is virtually identical with II Kings 24-25. This could indicate that one author borrowed from the other or that both received it from a third inspired author.
 3. Chapter 27:1 says “In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim . . .” yet the context makes clear it is Zedekiah’s reign (See 27:12). We have here one of those rare cases of a scribal error in the textual transmission.
 4. Jeremiah’s friends and family connections:
 - a. Jeremiah had an uncle named Shallum (32:7). Shallum was married to Huldah the prophetess (II Kings 22:14). She was Jeremiah’s prophetic contemporary.
 - b. Ahikam, son of Shapan, joined with Hilkiah the high priest in helping with

Josiah's reform (II Chron. 34:14-21).
 This same Ahikam later protected Jeremiah during Jehoiakim's reign (26:24).

5. To appreciate Jeremiah's book:
 - a. We must think of the preacher rather than just a book.
 - b. We must see him standing in the city gate or temple courtyard boldly proclaiming God's word and disputing with the people.
6. An ancient Jewish tradition states that Jeremiah was able to rescue the ark, its contents and the altar of incense and hide them in a cave from the Babylonians (II Macc. 2:1-7; also Eusebius).
- L. What great men have said about Jeremiah's book:
 1. "There is nothing in all scripture so eloquent of love and sorrow and consolation as the 31st and 33rd chapters of Jeremiah," Isaac Williams.
 2. "Jeremiah is the greatest lyric poet of them all," H. L. Ellison.

IV. *A Simple Analysis of Jeremiah:*

- A. His call and commission (chapter 1).
- B. Messages to Judah before the fall (chapters 2-38).
- C. The fall of Jerusalem (chapter 39).
- D. To the remnant after the captivity (chapters 40-42).
- E. His experience in Egypt (chapters 43-51).
- F. Historical review of the nation's downfall (chapter 52).

V. *Appendix: A Historical Chronology of Jeremiah's Times.*

OUTLINE OF JEREMIAH:

Introduction: (1:1-3):

- I. *Jeremiah's Call and Commission (1:4-19).*
 - A. The call and enduement (1:4-10).
 - B. The commission and promise (1:11-19).
- II. *He Proclaims Judah's Guilt (2:1 - 10:25).* (This section is autobiographical).
 - A. The impeachment summons (2:1 - 3:5).
 - 1. He reminds them of past blessings (2:1-7).
 - 2. He reproaches them for forsaking Jehovah (2:8-13).
 - 3. He shames them for their foolishness (2:14-37).
 - 4. He calls them to return to God (3:1-5).
 - B. The sins of the nation will be her destruction (3:6 - 6:30).
 - 1. Judah's sin is greater than Samaria's (3:6-10).
 - 2. God pleads for their return that he may bless them (3:11-25).
 - 3. Their repentance will spare them judgment by Babylon (4:1-4).
 - 4. The prophet sees the frightening scene of judgment on his impenitent people (4:5-31).
 - 5. The extent of their sin demands national punishment (5:1-31).
 - 6. Invaders from the north (Babylon) will

devour them as fire (6:1-30).

C. Jeremiah's temple sermon (7:1 - 10:25).

1. Ritual worship at the temple will not save the godless (7:1-15).
2. Their idolatry demands justice (7:16 - 8:3).
3. They were guilty of perpetual backsliding (8:4-17).
4. The prophet's despair for his people (8:18 - 9:11).
5. He urges them to consider the cause of their troubles (9:12-26).
6. Idolatry ridiculed, Jehovah praised (10:1-16).
7. Jeremiah grieves and pleads for mercy (10:17-25).

III. *Jeremiah's Confession and Judah's Coming Judgment (11:1 - 20:18)*. Autobiographical.

- A. A sermon on the broken covenant (11:1-17).
- B. The prophet's conflict with the homefolks at Anathoth (11:18-23).
- C. The sermon on the forsaken nation (12:1-17).
 1. The prophet's complaint and God's challenge (12:1-6).
 2. Jehovah's lament and promise (12:7-17).
- D. Five warnings (13:1-27).
 1. Episode of the marred girdle (13:1-11).
 2. Episode of the broken wine bottles (13:12-14).
 3. Warning against pride (13:15-17).
 4. Warning to King Jehoiachin (13:18-19).
 5. Warning of judgment from the north (Babylon) (13:20-27).

- E. An oracle about the drought (14:1 - 15:21).
 - 1. The drought described (14:1-6).
 - 2. The prophet's plea for mercy and God's response (14:7-12).
 - 3. The doom of false prophets (14:13-18).
 - 4. Jeremiah confesses the nation's sins (14:19-22).
 - 5. God responds; it is too late (15:1-21).
 - 6. A dialog between the prophet and God (15:10-21).
 - a. The prophet had allowed sinful doubt to creep into his heart (15:15-18).
 - b. God calls for his repentance and promises help (15:19-21).
- F. Jeremiah's loneliness a message of doom to the nation (16:1-21).
 - 1. He is forbidden to take a wife because of impending doom (16:1-4).
 - 2. He is forbidden to mourn for the dead (16:5-9).
 - 3. Reasons for their judgment (16:10-15).
 - 4. None shall escape (16:16-21).
- G. A sermon on the sins of Judah (17:1-18).
- H. A sermon on Sabbath keeping (17:19-27).
- I. Two lessons on God's supremacy over the nations (18:1 - 19:15).
 - 1. Episode and lesson at the potter's house (18:1-23).
 - 2. Sermon on the broken bottle (19:1-15).
- J. The prophet's conflict with Pashhur (20:1-18).
 - 1. Jeremiah's arrest and penalty (20:1-2).

2. He predicts Pashhur's doom (20:3-6).
3. His prayer (20:7-13).
4. His great frustration (20:14-18).

IV. *The Prophet's Conflicts With Kings, Priests and Prophets (21:1 - 29:32): Biographical.*

- A. Messages to David's Dynasty (21:1 - 23:40).
 1. A message of doom to Zedekiah (21:1-14).
 2. He preaches at the king's gate (22:1-9).
 3. He deplores the exile of Shallum (Jehoahaz) (22:10-12).
 4. He denounces Jehoiakim for his slave labor (22:13-23).
 5. He pronounces judgment on Coniah (Jehoiachin) (22:24-30).
 6. He speaks to Zedekiah about the Messianic king (23:1-8).
 7. He rebukes the false prophets (23:9-40).
- B. Sermon on two baskets of figs (24:1-10).
- C. Judgments predicted for Judah and all other heathen nations (25:1-38).
- D. Jeremiah arrested for predicting the temple's destruction (26:1-24).
- E. God commands the nations to submit to Nebuchadnezzar (27:1 - 29:32).
 1. His message illustrated by his wearing a wooden yoke (27:1-22).
 2. His confrontation with Hananiah the false prophet (28:1-17).
 3. Jeremiah's letter to the exiles in Babylon (29:1-32).

V. *Messages of Consolation (30:1 - 31:40): Biographical.*

- A. God promises restoration to his people (30:1-24).
- B. The north and south will be united in the restoration (31:1-40).
 - 1. Ephraim (the northern captives) will be redeemed (31:1-22).
 - 2. Judah shall be blest (31:23-30).
 - 3. A new covenant is promised (31:31-34).
 - 4. Jerusalem shall be rebuilt (31:35-40).

VI. *The Siege and Downfall of Jerusalem (32:1 - 39:18):*
(Biographical)

- A. Prison prophecies (32:1 - 34:22).
 - 1. Jeremiah imprisoned by Zedekiah (32:1-5).
 - 2. He is commanded to purchase property as assurance of future restoration to the land (32:6-44).
 - 3. He predicts the restoration of the Davidic dynasty and the whole nation (33:1-26).
 - 4. He tells Zedekiah that God will deliver the city over to the Babylonians (34:1-7).
 - 5. The king and people are rebuked for reneging on their promise to free their slaves (34:8-22).
- B. Prophecies and events during Jehoiakim's reign (35:1 - 36:32).
 - 1. The faithful Rechabites shame faithless Judah (35:1-19).
 - 2. Jehoiakim burns the book of Jeremiah's writings (36:1-32).
 - a. Baruch reads Jeremiah's sermon to the temple worshippers (36:1-10).
 - b. The king in anger destroys the book (36:11-26).

- c. God orders it rewritten and enlarged (36:27-32).
- C. Prophecies and events in the last months of Zedekiah's reign (37:1 - 39:18).
 - 1. Jeremiah is accused of desertion to the Babylonians and imprisoned (37:1-21).
 - 2. Jeremiah cast into the miry cistern but delivered by the Ethiopian (38:1-13).
 - 3. Zedekiah secretly confers with Jeremiah (38:14-28).
 - 4. The fall of the city to Babylon (39:1-18).
 - a. Zedekiah captured and exiled (39:1-10).
 - b. Jeremiah given freedom and protection (39:11-14).
 - c. A promise to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian (39:15-18).
- VII. *Events in Judah After the Fall of Jerusalem (40:1 - 44:30):*
 - A. Jeremiah is freed and returns to Gedaliah (40:1-6).
 - B. The return of Jewish fugitives to Judah (40:7-12).
 - C. The plot to kill Gedaliah (40:13-16).
 - D. Ishmael murders Gedaliah and others (41:1-18).
 - E. Jeremiah warns the remnant not to go to Egypt (42:1-22).
 - F. Prophecies and events in Egypt (43:1 - 44:30).
 - 1. The remnant disobeys God and flees to Egypt (43:1-7).
 - 2. Jeremiah pronounces their doom (43:8 - 44:14).
 - 3. Their angry response (44:15-19).

4. Jeremiah's final words (44:20-30).

VIII. *Jeremiah's Instructions to Baruch (45:1-5):* Biographical.

IX. *God's Message to the Pagan Nations (46:1 - 51:64):*

A. Babylon will smite Egypt (46:1-28).

B. The Philistines will also be smitten (47:1-7).

C. Moab will be laid waste (48:1-47).

D. Ammon will go into captivity (49:1-6).

E. Edom shall be overthrown (49:23-27).

F. Damascus, capital of Syria, will be taken (49:23-27).

G. Nebuchadnezzar will smite Kedar and Hazor - desert tribal nations (49:28-33).

H. Elam will be scattered (49:34-39).

I. God will punish Babylon (50:1 - 51:64).

1. When Babylon falls, Israel will be freed (50:1-20).

2. Her destruction described (50:21 - 51:58).

3. The charge to Seraiah to read this oracle to the captives in Babylon and destroy it (51:59-64).

X. *The Fall of Jerusalem Recounted (52:1-34):* Historical.

A. Zedekiah's reign and rebellion (52:1-5).

B. The fall of the city (52:6-11).

C. The city and temple looted and burned (52:12-23).

D. Record of Babylon's treatment of the prisoners (52:24-34).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. God chooses individuals and raises them up for his purposes (1:4-5).
2. God may use even a young man as his messenger to sinners.
3. What God asks us to do he equips us for. When so outfitted, he expects us to do his job.
4. Jehovah's heart is hurt when his chosen ones forget their sacred vows (2:32).
5. Formal repetition of pious phrases and the offering of costly sacrifices without obedience are but an insult to God.
6. Unless we worship as God wants us to, he does not accept our worship, no matter how beautifully done.
7. Sin, being a disease of the heart, must be dealt with by the Heavenly Physician who goes directly to the source.
8. Genuine repentance must precede the giving of God's blessings.
9. True religion is an inward, spiritual, genuine response of the heart to a righteous God.
10. We make the same mistake as did ancient Israel when we place all our emphasis on church buildings, programs and outer acts of worship but neglect personal commitment to God.
11. Spiritual power comes only to the man who walks close to God, filled with his word.
12. Sin always ends in ruin. Judgment is inevitable.

13. Like Abel, Jeremiah is dead, but his voice is still heard (Gen. 4:10).
14. Like Jesus, Jeremiah learned obedience by the things he suffered (Heb. 5:8).
15. Religion may be tested by its results in producing the right kind of conduct and attitude.
16. Sin cannot triumph, for God will have the final victory over evil.
17. The pen is mightier than the pen knife or the sword (36:11-32).
18. Each man will be judged as an individual by Almighty God.
19. The New Covenant provides a divine operation for the sinful human heart, that a new life may be had.
20. Suffering that drives one closer to God helps one to comprehend the deeper truths of God.
21. Rather than glory in wisdom, might or riches, let us glory in our knowledge of God (9:23-24).
22. It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps (10:23).
23. As God chastened Israel by war and national calamities, so he judges nations today.
24. We should be grateful that we enjoy the New Covenant that Jeremiah predicted (31:31-34).

APPENDIX A
Chronological Table:

B. C.

641	Accession of Josiah.
c. 630	Scythian migration begins.
627	Call of Jeremiah.
621	Discovery of the lost law.
610 - 594	Pharoah Necho king of Egypt.
609	Death of Josiah.
609	Three months' reign of Jehoahaz (Shallum) and deportation to Egypt.
608	Accession of Jehoiakim (Eliakim).
607	Fall of Nineveh and destruction of Assyrian Empire.
605	Egypt defeated by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish.
605	Nebuchadnezzar becomes king of Babylon.
604	Baruch writes the roll containing Jeremiah's prophecies.
603	Roll burnt by Jehoiakim and rewritten with additions by Baruch.
c. 598	Jehoiakim after three years' submission rebels against Nebuchadnezzar.
597	Death of Jehoiakim.
597	Three months' reign of Jehoiachin.
597	Jehoiachin and the flower of the nation taken captive to Babylon.
597	Accession of Zedekiah (Mattaniah).

B. C.

- 594 - 589 Psammetichus II, king of Egypt.
- 593 Surrounding peoples send ambassadors to Jerusalem to plan revolt against Babylon.
- 589 - 564 Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt.
- c. 588 Revolt of Zedekiah.
- 586 Destruction of Jerusalem, and second captivity to Babylon.

LAMENTATIONS – A FUNERAL DIRGE FOR JERUSALEM

- Key Verses:* 1:12 “Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow, like unto my sorrow, which is brought upon me . . .”
2:17 “Jehovah hath done that which he purposed, he hath fulfilled his word that he commanded in the days of old . . .”
3:22 “It is of Jehovah’s lovingkindness that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.”
- Key Word:* How (1:1; 2:1; 4:1).
- Key Thought:* Tears of sorrow (1:16; 2:11; 3:48; 5:17).
- Key Person:* Jeremiah, sorrowful survivor of the siege.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

- I. *Author:*
- A. The Hebrew text does not identify its author. The book is obviously written from the point of view of an eyewitness.
 - B. Hebrew and Christian tradition has unanimously attributed it to Jeremiah in days past.
 - C. The Septuagint prefixes this note, “and it came to pass after Israel was taken captive and Jerusalem made desolate, Jeremiah sat weeping and lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem and said . . .” The ancient Syriac, Arabic and Vulgate

translations attribute the authorship to Jeremiah.

- D. A comparison of the style and phraseology of Jeremiah and Lamentations leads one to the conclusion that they had a common author (for example: Jer. 7:21 and Lam. 1:15 or Jer. 9:1, 18b and Lam. 1:16a, etc.). “The character of the book shows the same emotional temperament, the same sensitiveness to sorrow, the same glowing and consuming patriotism that are conspicuous in the prophecies that bear Jeremiah’s name” (E. H. Plumptre).
- E. The author adopts the role of representative of the broken Hebrew people.
- F. Jeremiah also wrote a lamentation upon the death of King Josiah (II Chron. 35:25).
- G. For more information about the author, see the study on the Book of Jeremiah.

II. *About the Book:*

A. Title:

- 1. “The Lamentations of Jeremiah” is the name given by the Septuagint translators. The Greek is literally “The Tears of Jeremiah.”
- 2. The Hebrew title is simply “How,” the word which commences the first, second and fourth chapters. This reflects a common custom of the ancient Hebrews of naming a book by a conspicuous word near the beginning.

B. Style and structure:

- 1. The book is poetic in style.
- 2. Each chapter is a complete ode. The only

link that binds the five together is their common theme.

3. Chapters 1, 2, 4 and 5 have 22 verses each; Chapter 3 has 66, or 3 x 22 verses.
 4. The first four chapters are acrostics, being arranged alphabetically according to the Hebrew alphabet.
 - a. Such was a great help in memorizing the lines.
 - b. For some unknown reason, in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th chapter, the 17th and 16th verse letters are reversed.
 5. Chapter 3, having 66 verses, has three successive verses allotted to each letter.
 6. It is a dirge, i. e., a mourning song, bemoaning the destruction of the nation, Jerusalem in particular.
 7. In each poem, except the last, reference is made:
 - a. To the ruined condition of the city.
 - b. Followed by a justification of the Lord for so punishing them.
 - c. And a reference to those who pass by.
 - d. Each poem ends with a prayer, save the fourth.
 - e. It is followed by the fifth chapter which is altogether a prayer.
- C. Lamentations and the Liberal Critics:
1. The first to deny Jeremiah's authorship was Hermann von der Hardt in 1712.
 2. Most modern liberal scholars refuse to

acknowledge Jeremiah's authorship.

3. For an example of this liberal approach see the Introduction of Lamentations by T. K. Cheyne in the *Pulpit Commentary*.
 4. For a refutation and defense of Jeremiah's authorship see E. H. Plumptre's Introduction to Lamentations in *Ellicott's Old Testament Commentary for English Readers*.
- D. Interesting information about the book:
1. Its place in Hebrew worship: In the Hebrew Bible, it is listed among the "Five Rolls," called "Megilleth," appointed to be read on special occasions. They are Ruth, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations.
 2. It is read in synagogues annually on the ninth day of Ab (about mid-July), to commemorate the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar.
 3. On Friday afternoon, pious Jews in Palestine still gather at the "wailing wall," the ruins of Solomon's temple, and read these verses and mourn.
- E. What great men have said about Lamentations:
1. "There is nothing like the Lamentations of Jeremiah in the whole world" (Alexander Whyte).
 2. ". . . Lamentations is of value because it portrays the faith of those who believed that in spite of divine displeasure and chastisement God would still hear the cry of a penitent

race and lead it on to the fulfillment of its purpose" (S. C. Yoder).

F. A simple analysis of Lamentations:

1. Jerusalem, devastated and forsaken (1:1-22).
2. Reasons why it happened; repentance their only hope (2:1-22).
3. The ruined city's lament and words of penitence (3:1-66).
4. Her ancient glory and her present misery (4:1-22).
5. She casts herself upon God's mercy (5:1-22).

OUTLINE OF LAMENTATIONS:

- I. *Jerusalem, Like a Weeping Widow Mourning in Solitude (1:1-22).*
 - A. The desolation of Jerusalem (1:1-7).
 - B. Sin brings suffering (1:8-11).
 - C. Appeal to passers-by for sympathy (1:12-19).
 - D. Prayer to God for mercy and justice (1:20-22).
- II. *The City as a Veiled Woman, Mourns as She Realizes It Is God Who Has Punished Her (2:1-22).*
 - A. Her destruction is the act of God (2:1-9).
 - B. Horrors of desolation and famine (2:10-13).
 - C. Guilt of false prophets (2:14).
 - D. They that pass by reproach her (2:15-16).
 - E. God vindicated (2:17).
 - F. Prayer of the survivors (2:18-22).
- III. *Jerusalem's Bitter Mourning Represented by the Weeping Prophet (3:1-66).*
 - A. Lament of the afflicted (3:1-20).

- B. His hope amidst suffering (3:21-33).
- C. God is just in his discipline (3:34-39).
- D. A call for conversion (3:40-42).
- E. Sorrows of sin (3:43-54).
- F. Appeal to the Lord for help (3:55-66).
- IV. *The City Represented as Gold, Tarnished and Dimmed in Her Desolation (4:1-22).*
 - A. Horrors of the siege (4:1-10).
 - B. The cause of their judgment; corrupt religious leaders (4:11-16). God was justified in his judgments.
 - C. Vanity of human helpers and past achievements (4:17-20).
 - D. Edom shall not escape (4:21-22).
- V. *The City Represented as One Appealing for Mercy (5:1-22).*
 - A. An appeal for mercy in their calamity (5:1-6).
 - B. The disasters of sin (5:7-18).
 - C. An appeal to the Lord of the universe (5:19-22).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. The wages of sin is death.
2. God's judgments are wholly just.
3. God uses wicked nations to punish his rebellious children.
4. Our sins will separate us from God's love and protection.
5. We will reap what we sow.
6. Jeremiah found no joy in seeing his dire

predictions fulfilled.

7. Like Jeremiah every faithful prophet weeps for the calamities that come upon the impenitent.
8. Human alliances cannot save a nation when God decrees her fall.
9. Our sins will bring sorrow not only to us, but to our children.
10. When religious leaders become corrupt, what hope is left for a people?
11. God will preserve his righteous remnant even when a whole nation must be overthrown.
12. It is good to bear God's yoke in our youth (3:27).
13. When nations sin, they too must have their day of judgment.
14. God doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men (3:33).
15. It is a double tragedy when religious leaders lead the people into sin (4:13).

EZEKIEL – THE PROPHET OF EXILE

- Key Verses:* 3:16-19 “. . . Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel . . .”
21:2-3 “. . . prophesy against the land of Israel; and say . . . thus saith Jehovah: Behold I am against thee . . .”
36:28 “And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.”
- Key Phrases:* “Son of man,” used over 100 times. It stresses the humanity of Ezekiel in contrast to God.
“The word of Jehovah came unto me” used 49 times.
“And ye shall know that I am Jehovah” used over 60 times (see 6:7, 10, 13, etc.).
“The glory of the Lord” used 12 times in the first 11 chapters.
- Key Thought:* Ezekiel taught Israel that before they could ever return to their homeland, they must return to God.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

- I. *The Author:*
 - A. It is “the word of Jehovah that came expressly to Ezekiel the priest . . .” (1:3). “No question arises

in connection with the authorship of the book, the whole from beginning to end bearing unmistakably the stamp of a single mind" (S. R. Driver).

B. About the author:

1. His name means God will strengthen.
2. His father's name was Buzi (1:3).
3. He was a priest (1:3). Of the line of Zadok, of the family of Eleazer, son of Aaron the Levite (compare 43:19 and 40:46).
4. His birth date would have been 622 B. C. (1:1-3). This was in the midst of Josiah's reformation.
5. He was taken to Babylon at age 25 and began his work at age 30 (1:1).
6. As a young man in Jerusalem, he would have been exposed to the influence and teaching of Jeremiah the great prophet and priest of Anathoth.
7. He was happily married, but lost his wife in the midst of his ministry (24:15-18).
 - a. The 9th year of his captivity, the 4th of his ministry.
 - b. She died the day the siege of Jerusalem began (24:1, 15-18).
8. He was taken captive in 597 with King Jehoiachin and 10,000 of the aristocracy of Judah (II Kings 24:14-16).
 - a. The journey would have been a gruelling 700 miles over the hot arid trails.
 - b. It would have taken such a group some

three months.

9. His home in Babylonia was Telabib (hill of corn) by the river Chebar (the Grand Canal). Thought to be some 60 miles south of Babylon.
- C. His ministry:
 1. His call to serve as a prophet came with a spectacular vision of the Lord and a personal commission from him (1:3 - 3:11).
 2. "His mission was to justify God's dealings with Israel, and to keep alive in individual souls the faith which was ready to perish under the pressure of adversity" (James Hastings).
 3. His ministry lasted some 22 years, from 592 to 570 B. C.
 4. "Ezekiel stands forth as the most powerful figure during the years of Jewish captivity in Babylonia . . . He kept alive in an alien land the faith which had made Israel" (E. Chase).
 5. He deserves credit for leading the exiled nation safely through their ordeal.
 6. As a prophet and preacher:
 - a. As a prophet, preacher, writer and watchman of souls, Ezekiel stands with the greatest of the Hebrews.
 - b. He "is at once one of the most mysterious, yet one of the most entrancing, of the Hebrew seers" (J. P. Richter).
 - c. He was "a strange combination of poet and theologian" (Jordan).

- d. He was a public speaker and a literary man; a prophet as well as a priest. He looked to the future, but was still concerned for the immediate needs of his people.
 - e. He joined together the prophet's zeal for moral principles and the priest's concern for ritual. He has been called a prophet in a priest's robe.
 - f. He was a hard-headed preacher (3:8).
 - g. "Like a giant he wrestled against Jewish degeneracy and Babylonish pride" (D. Fraser).
 - h. Ezekiel was a strict moralist when such was not popular.
 - i. His preaching was frank and uncompromising.
 - j. He kept himself scrupulously clean from ceremonial defilement (4:14).
 - k. His title "son of Man" was used only of him and Daniel until Jesus came.
7. His method:
- a. He acted out his message on many occasions, using strange, sometimes bizzare, symbols and actions to convey his message.
 - b. His actions would have been judged abnormal in any period of time.
8. As a writer:
- a. "Considered as a writer, this prophet exhibits great excellencies, especially as

living in so dismal a period” (Ewald).

- b. He “delights in parables, riddles, songs, dirges, and elaborate pictures” (Jordan).
 - c. He surpasses all other prophets in his use of figurative language.
 - d. “More interesting than his writings and his importance for the development of Jewish thought is Ezekiel’s own personality” (J. Hastings).
- D. Of his death we have no certain information. Jewish legend has it that he was slain by the captives in an outburst of anger at his preaching.

II. *The Background of Ezekiel’s Work:*

A. In Jerusalem:

1. Following the tragic death of king Josiah in 609 B. C., his son Jehoahaz ruled but three months before being removed by the Egyptians. They placed Jehoiakim on the throne as a puppet.
2. In 606 Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem and placed the nation under tribute. Jehoiakim was allowed to hold the throne as a servant of Babylon.
3. Jehoiakim was removed in disgrace in 598-597 and Jehoiachin was given the scepter.
4. Jehoiachin reigned only three months until he and 10,000 prominent Hebrews were taken to Babylon. Ezekiel was in this group (II Kings 24:8-16).
5. Zedekiah was left as king, pledged to serve Nebuchadnezzar (II Kings 24:17).

6. Strong forces in the country clamored for an alliance with Egypt in order to resist Babylon. This ultimately led to the destruction of the nation.
 7. Zedekiah rebelled and Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to the city in 588. It fell in 586. He burned the city and deported the remainder of the people (II Kings 25:1-21).
 8. Jeremiah was God's prophet in Jerusalem. He waged a lonely and losing battle. He was hated by the people.
 9. The great majority of the people were totally apostate.
- B. In Babylon:
1. Large numbers of Hebrew exiles were there.
 - a. Those taken by the Assyrians were now under Babylon's control.
 - b. A small number had been taken in 606, Daniel was in that group.
 - c. The 10,000 were Ezekiel's peers.
 2. The exiles' situation in Babylon:
 - a. They seemed to enjoy considerable liberty.
 - b. They were not treated harshly as slaves.
 - c. They were settled in communities, family ties were respected.
 - d. They were allowed to practice their religion; their elders were allowed to function.
 - e. Many of them prospered since they were able to send large gifts for rebuilding the

temple.

- f. Their only restriction seems to have been that they could not return to their homeland.
3. False prophets were filling the exiles with false hopes for a speedy return to Jerusalem (Jer. 28:1-4).
 - a. They “saw peace for Jerusalem when there was no peace . . . and caused the people to trust in lies” (13:16, 19).
 - b. While Jeremiah was declaring the imminent fall of Jerusalem from within the city, Ezekiel was predicting the same from the land of Babylon.
 - c. It was his task to vindicate God for punishing them and to clear their minds of their delusions.
 - d. He had to convince them to “unpack,” to make their homes in Babylon and serve God, waiting for a future restoration (Jer. 29:4-10).
4. The people he worked with:
 - a. They were impudent and stiff-hearted (2:4; 3:7).
 - b. They were mean as scorpions (2:6).
 - c. They yet held their idols in their hearts (14:3).
 - d. They were guilty of idolatry, profanation of God’s worship, immorality, injustice and rebellion.
 - e. They were demoralized, feeling God had

failed to save them. Perhaps they thought he was weak or whimsical, or so angry that he would not do so.

5. The problem he faced: a false optimism. The people were convinced that Jerusalem could never fall to her enemies and be destroyed:
 - a. God's name was placed there forever (II Chron. 7:16).
 - b. David's sons would rule there forever (II Chron. 7:18).
 - c. The land of Palestine was Israel's forever (Gen. 17:8).
 - d. They had failed to read the conditions for the above blessings (II Chron. 7:13-14).
6. Daniel was Jehovah's prophet to the Babylonian rulers, Ezekiel to the captive Hebrews.
7. In the land of Babylon the synagogue and the office of the scribe were born. They have stayed with the Jews to this day.
- C. For a history of the period, see II Kings chapters 21-25 and II Chronicles chapters 33-36.

III. *About the Book:*

- A. It bears the name of its inspired author.
- B. Literary style and qualities:
 1. His style is unique and different from all other inspired authors. He makes extensive use of proverbs, parables, allegories, visual aids and dramatics. He uses symbolism more than any other prophet.
 2. His book is orderly, systematic and well

outlined. It reflects careful planning.

3. He writes throughout in the first person.
 4. He carefully dates his prophecies because they cannot be understood apart from the history of that period.
 5. Ezekiel's priestly background is reflected in his book. "His thoughts seem perpetually to linger about the temple, and ever delight to find in its symbolic materials and forms of worship the channels through which to unfold the truths he was commissioned to declare" (P. Fairbairn).
- C. Date: The book would most likely have been written during those years of his active ministry (592-570 B. C.).
- D. His purposes:
1. To dispel the foolish and faulty hopes of a speedy deliverance from Babylon.
 2. To expose the deep and chronic apostasy of the Hebrews which was the reason for their punishment.
 3. To interpret the meaning and purpose of the captivity.
 4. To stir to repentance the godly remnant that they might be salvaged.
 5. To preserve the faith of the exiles while in captivity.
 6. To console the people in the midst of their hardships.
 7. To prepare them for their future role in God's plan.

E. Ezekiel and the Old Testament:

1. He makes extensive use of Jeremiah and the Pentetuch.
2. For a listing of these verses see the *Pulpit Commentary* on Ezekiel, pp. XXV, XXVI.

F. Ezekiel and the New Testament:

1. Judgment must begin at God's house (compare 9:6 with I Peter 4:17).
2. One flock and one shepherd (compare 37:24 with John 10:16).
3. At least eleven quotes and allusions from the prophet are found in the Revelation.

G. Ezekiel and Jeremiah contrasted:

1. "Jeremiah was a prophet that happened to be a priest; Ezekiel was a priest that happened to be a prophet."
2. His book reflects the impact Jeremiah made on him.
3. Jeremiah worked in the city of Jerusalem while Ezekiel was in the camp of the exiles at Babylon.
4. Jeremiah lived apart from the people, constantly at war with the sinful ones. Ezekiel was a shepherd, leading his people in a more practical way.
5. Jeremiah was openly opposed and persecuted; Ezekiel was not.
6. Jeremiah mainly denounced the sins of the nation; Ezekiel denounced but also encouraged them with promises of restoration.
7. Jeremiah was a man of deep emotions and

bold actions; Ezekiel was a man of reflection, reason and symbolism.

8. Ezekiel was in no way a political or social reformer as was Jeremiah.

H. Ezekiel and the liberal critics:

1. Until the last 50 years almost no one questioned the integrity and authenticity of Ezekiel's book.
2. The modern trend of liberals is to deny his authorship, attributing it to some post exilic writer.
3. Some would begrudgingly grant some 25% of the first 39 chapters to him and none of the last nine.
4. H. L. Ellison observes that the critical assaults have largely cancelled each other out.
5. For a good summary of their skeptical views, see R. H. Harrison's *Introduction to the Old Testament*.
6. S. R. Driver's opinion is yet valid. "No question arises in connection with the authorship of the book, the whole from the beginning to end bearing unmistakably the stamp of a single mind."

I. Miscellaneous facts about Ezekiel:

1. "Probably no book of the Old Testament is as little read as his, and it may well be the least popular, as it is the least known of the Old Testament" (Paterson).
2. "His book is difficult, obscure and tantalizing . . . but it contains a message that modern

man needs just as much as the Hebrew exiles needed it.”

3. “There is no book of the Old Testament in which the theological views of the author shine out with greater clearness than they do in this” (P. C. Plumptre).
4. Ezekiel adds something almost completely missing from modern thought, the element of hope” (A. Blackwood).
5. Characteristics of his book:
 - a. He makes it clear that all his visions, symbols and oracles are from God.
 - b. His message is highly idealistic.
 - c. It reflects a refined and cultured diction.
 - d. Its style is simple.
6. Ezekiel is the prophet of the Holy Spirit. At least 25 references to the Holy Spirit are found in his book; more than in any other Old Testament book.
7. Symbolic actions and signs are used by Ezekiel more than any other prophet. Many of his messages were mimed or acted out. The greatest difficulty in interpreting chapter 1 is that no symbolism is adequate to describe God.
8. The ancient Jewish scholars were troubled by Ezekiel.
 - a. Some of them questioned Ezekiel’s place in the sacred canon. The school of Sham-mai thought it conflicted with Moses’ law. Rabbi Hananyah ben Hezekiah defended

the book and preserved its place by offering to explain it. The rabbis offered him 300 bottles of oil for the long nights of study before him.

- b. Not appreciating his Messianic message, they imagined some 20 apparent discrepancies between Ezekiel and the Law.
 - c. The Talmud said when Elijah came the difficulties would be explained.
 - d. The rabbis argued that no one should study Ezekiel until he was at least 30 years of age.
 - e. They said that he who understood the winged chariot knew all the mysteries of creation.
9. To properly understand Ezekiel, remember that:
- a. “The prophet speaks primarily to the men of his own time and his message springs out of the circumstances in which he lives” (Ellison).
 - b. “We best understand Ezekiel as we try to grasp what his own generation should have understood . . .” (Ellison).
10. The Hebrew text of Ezekiel has been poorly preserved. Two fragments were found at Qumran.
11. What Bible scholars have said about Ezekiel and his book:
- a. Jerome said the study of Ezekiel was like walking through the catacombs where

light seldom breaks through.

- b. John Calvin did not finish his commentary on Ezekiel.
- c. "Ezekiel excels all former prophets in point of skill, beauty, and perfection of treatment" (Ewald).
- d. The book has "a colossal character which frequently points to those powerful impressions experienced by the prophet in a foreign land . . ." (Havernick).
- e. "The whole of Ezekiel's symbolism is derived from the Israelitish sanctuary, and is an outcome of Old Testament ideas and views" (Kiel).
- f. "With divine authority Ezekiel dispelled illusions, denounced false prophets, declared repentance, restoration and renewal" (H. Lockyer).
- g. He has been called:
 - (1) The Dante of the Old Testament.
 - (2) The father of later Judaism.
12. A chronology of Ezekiel's life and prophecies, see Appendix A.
13. A diagram of the distribution of the ideal community, see Appendix B.
14. The cherubim of Ezekiel 1, see Appendix C.

IV. *A Simple Summary:*

- A. The prophet's call and commission (chap. 1-3).
- B. The fall of Judah and Jerusalem announced (chap. 4-24).

- C. Judgments against heathen nations (chap. 25-32).
- D. Israel's future blessings (chap. 33-48).

OUTLINE OF EZEKIEL:

Introduction: (1:1-3).

- I. *The Prophet's Call and Commission (1:1 - 3:27):*
 - A. Ezekiel's call to the prophetic office (1:4-28):
He needed to know more about Jehovah, so God revealed himself to him, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient.
 - 1. His vision of stormy wind and fire (1:4).
 - 2. The four cherubim (1:5-14).
 - 3. The wheels (1:15-21).
 - 4. The throne of the glory of Jehovah (1:22-28a). The key to the vision is seen in 1:28b.
 - B. The prophet's commission (2:1 - 3:27):
 - 1. The charge to speak God's word (2:1-7).
He needed to know more about his mission, so God reveals that in 2:1-7.
 - 2. Ezekiel commanded to "eat God's book," i.e., to ingest its message. He needed to know about his message, so God gave him the scroll (2:8 - 3:3).
 - 3. God promises to equip him for his chore.
He needed strength for his task – God promised to equip him (3:4-11).
 - 4. He is taken in the spirit to the camp of the captives in Babylon. He needed to know his

audience, so he went to the exiles at Telabib (3:12-15).

5. His duties as a watchman innumerable. He needed to know his duties so they were given (3:16-21).
6. A second vision of God with a special commission to speak God's message to rebellious Judah (3:22-27).

II. *Prophecies Against Judah Before the Fall of Jerusalem (4:1 - 24:27).*

A. Messages of the fifth year, 592 B. C. (4:1 - 7:27).

1. Four acted prophecies (4:1 - 5:17).
 - a. A picture of the siege of Jerusalem (4:1-3).
 - b. He lays on his left and then right side symbolically bearing the iniquity of Israel and Judah (4:4-8).
 - c. The coming famine acted out (4:9-17).
 - d. Slaughter of the siege described (5:1-4).
 - e. An exposition of the signs (5:5-17).
2. Apostrophe to the land of Israel, announcing the impending disaster (6:1-14).
3. Israel's inescapable doom declared (7:1-27).
 - a. Four short oracles declaring doom (7:1-13).
 - b. The machinery of destruction is already at work (7:14-27).

B. Messages of the sixth year, 592-591 B. C. (8:1 - 19:14).

1. He views the idolatry taking place in the temple in Jerusalem in a vision (8:1-18).

2. Slaughter of Jerusalem, but preservation of the righteous remnant foreseen (9:1-11).
3. He sees coals of fire cast over Jerusalem – it will be burned (10:1-8).
4. The glory of God departs from the temple (10:9-22).
5. Wicked rulers in Jerusalem denounced but a sure promise of restoration given (11:1-25). The men of Jerusalem thought they were favored of God by being left in the land and that the exiles were cursed. Really, the exiles were blest and kept by God, those in Jerusalem would be destroyed (11:14-16; Jer. 24).
6. Prophecy of Zedekiah's exile and captivity acted out by Ezekiel (12:1-16).
7. Another prophecy of the consternation of the Hebrews acted out (12:17-20).
8. Chapters 12:21 - 14:11 contain 5 oracles against false prophets.
9. Message against false prophets and prophetesses who said, "Peace when there was no peace" (12:21 - 13:23).
10. Judgment decreed upon the idolators in Israel, but the remnant will be spared (14:1-23).
11. Jerusalem declared to be as worthless as the dead wood in the vineyard, so it will be destroyed (15:1-8).
12. Despite God's tender-loving care, Jerusalem had repaid him by playing the harlot in idolatry; therefore, they must be punished

(16:1-63).

13. With the allegory of two eagles and a vine, he predicts God's judgment upon Judah for seeking Egypt's help against Babylon (17:1-29).
 14. God is just, only the soul that sinneth shall die (18:1-32).
 15. With a parable of a lioness and her whelps, he predicts the captivity of Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin and laments their fall (19:1-14).
- C. Messages of the seventh year, 590 B. C. (20:1 - 23:49).
1. He rehearses their continued idolatries. In spite of this, he had spared them for his own name's sake (20:1-44).
 2. Prophecies of fire and sword against Jerusalem and Judah (20:45 - 21:32).
 3. The catalogue of Jerusalem's sins and her punishment (22:1-31).
 4. Samaria and Jerusalem pictured as two vile harlots to be punished (23:1-49).
- D. Message of the ninth year, 588 B. C. No mourning for Ezekiel's wife or for Jehovah's fallen Israel (24:1-27).
- III. *Prophecies Against Heathen Nations.* Vindication of God's Moral Law on Other Nations, Especially for Sins Against Israel (25:1 - 32:32).
- A. Against Ammon, Moab, Edom and Philistia her nearest neighbors (25:1-17).
 - B. Against Tyre and Sidon, the mart of the nations (26:1 - 28:26).
 1. Doom of Tyre (26:1-21).

2. Lament over Tyre (27:1-26).
3. Downfall of the King of Tyre (28:1-19). The fulfillment is recorded in 29:17-20.
4. Doom of Sidon (28:20-23).
5. Restoration of Israel (28:24-26).
- C. Prophecies against Egypt (29:1 - 32:32):
 1. Doom of Egypt (29:1-16). Spoken in January 587, seven months before the fall of Jerusalem; Pharaoh Hophrah spoken of.
 2. Egypt's humiliation (29:17 - 32:16).
 3. Egyptians will be cast into Sheol (32:17-32).
- IV. *Prophecies of Israel's Reconstruction and Restoration Delivered After Jerusalem's Fall (33:1 - 48:35).*
 - A. Preparation for the return of the glory of the Lord (33:1 - 39:29).
 1. Responsibilities of the prophet and the people (33:1-33).
 - a. Prophets are God's watchmen, warning his people (33:1-9).
 - b. Every man is responsible only for his sins (33:10-20).
 - c. News of Jerusalem's destruction (33:21-33) August 586.
 2. God's people will be delivered from false shepherds; Jehovah himself will be shepherd (34:1-31):
 - a. Unfaithful rulers and leaders condemned (34:1-10).
 - b. Blessings when Jehovah shepherds Israel (34:11-31).
 3. The doom of those that hate Israel (35:1-15).

4. The return and revival of captive Israel (36:1 - 37:28):
 - a. The land of Israel shall be blest (36:1-15).
 - b. The people of Israel shall be restored for Jehovah's sake (36:16-38).
 - c. National resurrection of Israel (37:1-14).
 - d. The divided nation shall be united under one king (37:15-28).
5. Destruction of the godless nations symbolized by Gog (38:1 - 39:29).
- B. Restoration of divine worship with attendant blessings (40:1 - 48:35):
 1. The new temple (40:1 - 43:27).
 - a. Description of outer courts, chambers and porch (40:1-49).
 - b. Measurements, parts and ornaments of the temple (41:1-26).
 - c. Description of priest's chambers and the gates and walls (42:1-20).
 - d. Return of the glory of the Lord to the temple (43:1-12).
 - e. The altar and sacrifices of the temple (43:13-27).
 2. Instructions and ordinances for the Levites and priests of the temple (44:1-31).
 3. Land set aside for priests of the temple, the oblations and offerings (45:1 - 46:24).
 4. The healing river from the temple (47:1-23).
 5. The division of the land by tribes (48:1-29).
 6. The new city, "Jehovah-shammah," Jehovah is there (48:30-35).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. Not all preachers are cast in a common mold. We must not expect it nor despise those who are different from our favorite.
2. God desires the salvation of all men.
3. Each man must bear the responsibility for his own sin (18:20).
4. Anyone can condemn his enemies, but it takes a great man to rebuke his friends.
5. The terrific responsibility that rests upon God's messengers should cause them to remain faithful.
6. The church in every age needs hard-headed preachers like Ezekiel.
7. The minister must not let personal griefs and disappointments injure his ministry.
8. The work of preaching God's message is no bed of roses. Sometimes God's man finds himself among scorpions.
9. As a faithful watchman, the preacher must warn the sinner of his folly.
10. Before one can be effective as a teacher, he must see the problem from the other man's point of view.
11. The fall of Judah was not due to God's weakness or some failure on his part, but because of their sins.
12. God will not always strive with sinful men.
13. Israel had to learn that they had not been chosen to rule the world but to lead men to

the knowledge of the one God.

14. What he cannot do for us (because of us) he can do for his own name-sake.
15. Israel was not God's elected favorite, but his selected servant (Harrell).
16. God wants us to see his great love as shown in the story of the good shepherd.
17. Here we see the value of repentance and forgiveness.
18. Before they could hope to return to Jerusalem they had to return to God — so also must we.
19. It is personal faith and obedience, not ancestry, that determines our standing before God (18:1-32).
20. From God flows the life-giving stream that will heal and save all who come to it and drink.
21. God works his will among the nations that the world may know that he is Jehovah.
22. The exile was an act of grace on God's part. The real sinners were left in Jerusalem for fiery punishment.
23. One day, God's people will live with him in the heavenly city, Jehovah-shammah.
24. "It is the prophet who has raised the race from ignoble sleep, has filled its imagination with lofty ideals, has moved it for costly sacrifices, has led it to victory" (John Watson).

APPENDIX A

Chronological Tables

Historical Events Connected With Ezekiel's Prophecies

B. C.

701	Deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib
698	Manasseh
641	Josiah
630	Scythian invasion
627	Jeremiah begins his work
621	Discovery of the Book of Law
609/8	Josiah slain at Megiddo, Jehoahaz succeeded by Jehoiakim (Eliakim)
606/5	Defeat of Necho at Carchemish. Jerusalem placed under Babylonian control, Jehoiakim being allowed to hold the throne until 598/97
597	Surrender of Jehoiachin; First deportation; Zedekiah appointed king
588	Siege
586	Pharaoh's attempted assistance (Fall of Jerusalem, April; Second deportation, July; Nebuchadnezzar attacks Tyre)
581	Third deportation
568	Nebuchadnezzar invades Egypt
562	Death of Nebuchadnezzar
538	Cyrus takes Babylon
536	First return of Jews under Zerubbabel; Restoration of Altar
520	Rebuilding of temple commenced
515	Temple completed

B. C.

444

Ezra reads the law at Jerusalem

DATES OF EZEKIEL'S PROPHECIES

Part I: Chapters I - XXIV

B. C.

July

592

i. 2.

The Prophet's Call. First Cycle of Threats.

Aug.

591

viii. 1.

Jerusalem's Sin. Second Cycle of Threats.

Aug.

590

xx. 1.

Third Cycle of Threats.

Jan.

587

xxiv. 1.

The End at Hand.

Part II: Chapters XXV - XLVIII

Division I - Chapters XXV - XXXII

The Fall of the Nations

**

**

xxv. 1.

Oracles against Ammon, & c., and Tyre.

Jan.

586

xxix. 1.

Oracle against Egypt.

Mar.

586

xxx. 20.

Oracle against Egypt.

May

586

xxxi. 1.

Oracle against Egypt.

Division II - Chapters XXXIII - XXXIX

The Purification of Israel

Jan.

585

xxxiii. 21.

Individual Responsibility. The Restoration and Final Deliverance.

Mar.

585

xxvi. 1.

Nebuchadnezzar's attack on

B. C.

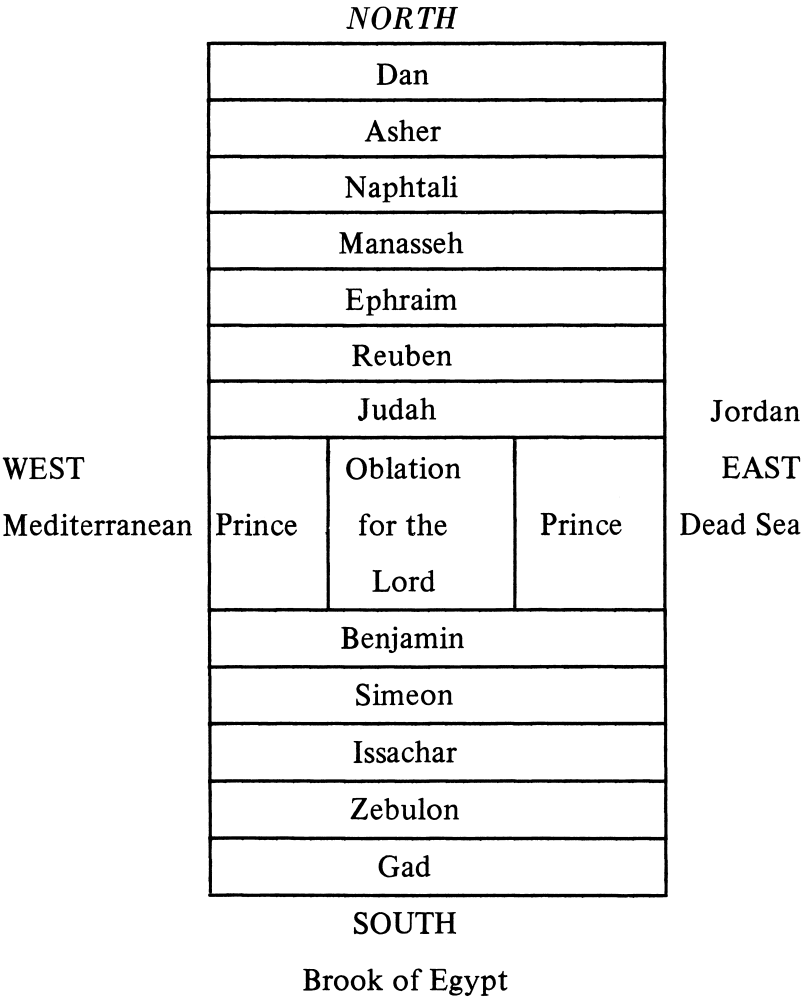
			Tyre.
Feb.	584	xxxii. 1.	Dirge over Egypt.
Feb.	584	xxxii. 17.	Dirge over Egypt.

Division III - Chapters XL - XLVIII
The Ordering of the Nation

Sept.	572	x1. 1.	The Temple, the Temple Service, and the Land.
Mar.	570	xxix. 17.	Last Prophecy on Tyre.

Lofthouse, W. F., *The Century Bible*, Ezekiel, Edinburgh,
 no date.

APPENDIX B
Distribution of the Land According to Ezek. 48:1-29



APPENDIX C

The Cherubim

One of the many mysteries of God's book is the cherubim that surround the heavenly throne. These strange creatures are vividly pictured in Ezekiel and the Revelation and slightly mentioned in Isaiah. Unfortunately the King James Translators call them beasts, but the Greek does not suggest that nor do their attributes reflect such an idea. Later translations are uniform in calling them living creatures or beings. The question for this study is just what are these living creatures?

THEIR ASPECT

"They had the *likeness of a man*" (1:5). That would be their general bodily form.

"Everyone had four faces . . ."

1. "They had the face of a man" (1:10). This suggests intelligence like a human being possesses.
2. The face of a lion, which suggests fearless strength and courage.
3. The face of an ox, suggesting service and strength.
4. The face of an eagle. This suggests the keen sight of this bird or its swiftness of flight to reach its objective.

THEIR BODILY MEMBERS

“Everyone of them had *four wings*” (1:6). Wings suggest swiftness and mobility to get a task done. While two wings are normally sufficient, these have four each, twice that which is necessary. They would never be disabled or hindered by infirmity.

“Their feet were straight feet and the sole of their feet was like a calf’s foot and they sparkled like burnished brass” (1:7). Their feet were hard and tough like a cow’s, thus they were able to continually do their task without their feet growing sore and weary. Burnished brass is purified and tempered. Calf’s feet are hard but feet like brass would be extra hard and able to grind any opponent into the dust.

“They had hands like a man” (1:8). That means that they had the dexterity and skill of a man to do their task.

“Their wings were joined together” (1:9). They worked together with perfect unity in serving God, never at odds with one another.

Although they were joined together, “They turned not when they went; they went straight forward” (1:9b). In normal earthly realms such seems impossible, but the meaning here is that the creatures were *omnipresent* for they could be at any place at any time and never have to leave the place they occupied. Keep this thought in mind when we seek a conclusion as to who or what they were.

The creatures ran and returned as a flash of lightning” (1:14). This demonstrates the swiftness of their movement. As the lightning can streak across the heavens in a moment, so could they be anywhere instantly to do God’s will.

THEIR APPEARANCE

“Their appearance was like burning coals of fire” (1:13), like glowing molten metal (1:4). This reflects their holy majesty. Every impurity would be consumed in their presence. Human eyes would be unable to dwell upon them. The glorified Christ shone as the sun (Matt. 17:2). Deity dwells in light unapproachable (I Tim. 6:16).

As torches give light for men to see by, so these have “the appearance of torches” (1:13). Flashes of lightning danced back and forth upon them and outward from them (1:13-14). No man would dare draw near to such a spectacular demonstration of power lest he be consumed.

THEIR MOBILITY

“Behold, one wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures . . .” (1:15). As Ezekiel looked the four wheels pointed in different directions. All seemed to be interlocked as one great system — a wheel within a wheel (1:16-17). Wheels suggest their mobility.

The four great wheels “had their rims full of eyes round about.” The many eyes suggest that they knew all things; they possessed *omniscience* even as Christ (Rev. 1:6).

“Their work was like unto beryl . . .” or topaz (1:16) which speaks of their infinite beauty.

THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO THE DIVINE THRONE

“Over the head of the living creatures there was the

likeness of a firmament, like the terrible crystal . . . stretched over their heads above" (1:22). "And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne . . . and upon the . . . throne was that likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above" (1:26). "This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah" (1:28). The cherubim then are the *chariot throne of God*. When the Lord Jehovah came in judgment on Jerusalem, the glory of Jehovah mounted the throne over the cherubim and they lifted their wings and mounted up from the earth (10:18-19). The noise of their wings was like the noise of great waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a noise of tumult like the noise of a host" (1:24). This implies a fearful roaring sound when the chariot throne lifts up. Such *omnipotent* power would strike terror in any heart that contemplated it. John says they have no rest day or night as they praise the Holy God (Rev. 4:8). This also reflects their total power and strength.

WHO OR WHAT ARE THESE CREATURES?

In 10:20, Ezekiel calls them cherubim. Isaiah called them seraphim (6:6). In the Revelation they are "living creatures" (4:6).

The reader will remember that the cherubim possessed attributes of *omnipotence*, and *omniscience* and *omnipresence*. Rather than being created servants, I suggest that they symbolize the spiritual forces of the great Jehovah himself who is fully able to accomplish every desire and intent of his heart in the way this visual symbol represents. Only God sees all, knows all, and has all power.

DANIEL – PROPHET OF WORLD HISTORY

- Key Verse:* 4:25 “. . . the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.”
- Key Thought:* The superiority of Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews over all pagan gods and rulers.
- Key People:* Daniel the prophet of God.
Nebuchadnezzar, proud pagan king of Babylon.
Darius, ruler of the Persian province of Babylon.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

- I. *The Man:*
- A. Born about 620 B. C.
 - 1. Taken to Babylon as prisoner of war in 605 B. C. when about 15 years old.
 - 2. Spent the rest of his life in Babylon, dying at the age of 85-90.
 - B. Of the tribe of Judah: Of a noble family, possibly of the royal seed (1:3-6).
 - C. His name Daniel, meant “God is my judge.” The Babylonians gave him the name Belteshazzar which meant “protect his life” and may possibly have signified the protection of their God, Bel.
 - D. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and

likely other promising youths were placed in the hands of Ashpenaz, master of the king's eunuchs, for three years preparatory training that they might become royal ministers (1:3-6).

- E. He was "well favored with no blemish, skilled in wisdom, endowed with knowledge and understood science" (1:3-6).
- F. His Babylonian education included the learning and the language of the Chaldeans, i.e., cuneiform (1:4).
- G. God gave him knowledge and skill in *all* learning and wisdom and the understanding of all dreams and visions (1:17). His wisdom and understanding were found to be ten times better than all the magicians and enchanterers of Babylon (1:20).
- H. He was raised to the highest civil posts in three governments. He excelled as a statesman.
 - 1. Nebuchadnezzar made him ruler over the province of Babylon and chief governor over all wise men (2:48).
 - 2. Belshazzar appointed him third ruler in the kingdom (5:29).
 - 3. Darius made him one of three ruling presidents (6:2).
- I. His character:
 - 1. From his teens he was an example of religious consistency and firmness.
 - 2. Though always willing to serve his royal masters, yet he was careful to preserve a

conscience void of offense.

3. He declared God's truth boldly, yet without arrogance.
4. His enemies could find no occasion of fault against him, except his integrity in keeping the law of his God (6:5).
5. He was an example of honesty, humility, piety and courage. He would readily die for his faith.
6. Ezekiel praised him as a righteous man of the same calibre of Noah and Job (Ezek. 14:14).

II. *His Times:*

- A. In his life he saw his nation overrun by the Babylonians. In three movements, they were deported to Babylon and Jerusalem and the temple destroyed.
- B. He saw the golden kingdom of Babylon crumble and fall and the Persians conquer it.
- C. He saw the remnant of Hebrews return to their native land after 70 years in captivity:
 1. It had been a time of crisis for the Israelites.
 2. Their idolatry and rebellion had to be purged.
 3. Their faith had to be rekindled.
- D. Ezekiel and Jeremiah were his contemporaries:
 1. Ezekiel was with the prisoners in a work camp on the river Chebar.
 2. Jeremiah remained with the survivors in the homeland.

3. Daniel lived in the royal courts of Babylon.

E. Kings under which Daniel lived:

Kings of Babylon:

1. Nabopolassar, 625-605 B. C.
 2. Nebuchadnezzar, 604-561.
 3. Evil Merodach, 561-559.
 4. Neriglissar, 559-556.
 5. Labash-Marduk, 556.
 6. Nabonidus
 7. Belshazzar
- 555-538 co-regents

Kings of Persia:

8. Darius the Mede, 536 (interim)
9. Cyrus the Great, 536-529.

F. Babylon, the city in which Daniel lived:

1. The wonder city of the ancient world.
2. Nebuchadnezzar's building projects beautified above all other cities.
3. Its outer walls were 60 miles around, 15 miles square.
4. Walls were 300 ft. high, 80 ft. thick, set 35 ft. in the ground.
5. 250 towers guarded the walls, 100 brass gates made it accessible.
6. The Euphrates flowed under its walls, through the midst of the city.
7. A drawbridge and a tunnel joined the two parts of the city.
8. The Temple of Marduk (Bel) was the greatest temple in that part of the world. Its golden image of Bel and its altar weighed 50,000 pounds.

9. There were 53 temples and 180 altars to Ishtar.
10. Other notable places were Nebuchadnezzar's palace and the Hanging Gardens, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.
11. Today Babylon is only a heap of dust covered ruins, totally destroyed as prophesied in Jer. 51:37-43, and Isa. 13:17-22.

III. *Style and Structure of His Book:*

- A. The book divides into two main sections:
 1. Chapters 1-6 are historical, dealing with important events in Babylon.
 2. Chapters 7-12 are prophetical, revealing future movements of world governments and the coming and work of Christ and His kingdom.
- B. In its original form, the book is in dual languages:
 1. 1:1 - 2:4a and 8:1 - 12:13 are in Hebrew.
 2. 2:4b - 7:28 are in Aramaic.
 3. Aramaic being the language of the world, it is used in those portions which outline the future history of the world empires. Hebrew is used in those portions which interpret for the Hebrews the meaning of the visions (E. Young).
 4. Aramaic was the lingua franca of all the ancient world.
- C. There is no progressive chronology in Daniel:
 1. The first 5 chapters are in order.
 2. Chapters 7-12 are self-dating.

- D. The book is not a biography of Daniel, it provides only enough of his life for a backdrop for its message.
 - E. Its prophecy is of a style termed Apocalyptic. That is, using bold symbols and figures to describe the future of nations, the kingdom of God and the end.
 - F. It has a strong Messianic message, especially chapters 2, 7 and 9.
 - G. There is a remarkable similarity between Daniel and the book of Revelation (see Appendix A).
- IV. *Daniel's Message:*
- A. The book of Daniel seeks to show the superiority of the God of Israel over the idol gods of the pagan nations.
 - B. Prior to the captivity, Israel had been almost submerged in idolatry. The 70 years in Babylon were designed to teach them that idols were of no value and it was therefore foolish to worship them.
 - C. In Daniel, we see the humiliation of the idol gods and the glorious victories of Jehovah.
 - D. Jehovah met and solved every problem; the idols failed at all of them.
 - E. Daniel assured the Hebrews that God's covenant and promise to them would be fulfilled; that Messiah would come and the eternal kingdom of God would be established in due time.
 - F. In this, the book was a great comfort to the Hebrews in the hardships they were enduring.
- V. *Attacks of Unbelievers:*

- A. Today most liberal scholars believe the book, as we have it, was written in the days of the Maccabees, 168 B. C. These unbelievers judge it to be a book of historical fiction to which the name of Daniel was forged.
- B. Their main objections are briefly:
 - 1. The place of Daniel in the Hebrew canon:
 - a. In modern Hebrew Bibles, Daniel is not found among the prophets, but with the “writings,” the Hagiographa; Psalms, Proverbs, etc.
 - b. But Daniel did not occupy the usual office of the prophet, although he did have the gift of prophecy. He was a civil servant, under the ruling governments. Some half of his writings were historical rather than prophetic.
 - c. The “writings” are as genuine as the prophets and even older. So their complaint proves nothing.
 - 2. Alleged historical inaccuracies:
For a thorough discussion and refutation of these see G. L. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, pages 365-388.
 - 3. Critics say the presence of a few Persian and Greek words demands late (Maccabean) date.
 - a. “Recent discoveries may require that many preconceived notions as to the characteristics of the Aramaic language will have to be modified”

- (Young).
- b. Conservatives do not maintain that the book was composed, in its final form, until the Persian period.
 - c. Archer points out that in reality this argument strengthens the case for an early date for Daniel.
4. For a good study in these areas, see E. J. Young, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*.
- C. The strongest evidence for the genuineness of Daniel is the endorsement of Jesus in Matt. 24:15.
- D. "With Daniel's stress on the sovereignty of God, which not only compels rebellious men to do his will, but is also most obnoxious to the humanist, it incurs the heaviest attacks of unbelievers, both within and without the churches" (Ellison).
1. "The book of Daniel is especially fitted to be a battleground between faith and unbelief. It admits of no halfway measures. It is either divine or an imposture" (E. B. Pusey).
 2. The first to attack the historicity of Daniel was Porphyry, a Gentile Neo-Platonist philosopher in the third century.
 3. Also Uriel Acosta (1590-1647) a Jewish rationalist attacked it.
 4. It is strange to see "Christian" theologians preaching the message of infidels.
 5. "We suspect that the real crux of the

attempt to discredit the book of Daniel is the unwillingness of intellectual pride to accept the marvelous miracles and amazing prophecies recorded in the book" (Halley).

VI. *Background Scripture History:*

A. II Kings 23:28 - 25:30.

B. II Chron. 35:20 - 36:23.

OUTLINE OF DANIEL: (Chapters 1-6 are a history of Daniel).

I. *Education and Testing of Young Daniel in Nebuchadnezzar's Court (1:1-21):*

A. The expedition of Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem (1:1-2).

B. Introduction of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (1:3-7).

C. First test of Daniel's faithfulness (1:8-16):

1. His purpose not to defile himself with pagan foods (1:8).

2. Triumph of God's grace in Babylon, protecting his children (1:9-16).

3. Heathen customs judged.

D. Progress of the young Hebrews and their appointment to the service of the king (1:17-21).

II. *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the "Metalic Man" (2:1-49):*

A. The king's dream (2:1-6).

B. The inability of pagan wise men to know the forgotten dream (2:7-12).

C. Decree to slay all wise men (2:13-16).

- D. Daniel prays for divine guidance and revelation and is heard (2:17-24).
 - E. He interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream (2:24-45):
 - 1. He gives God all credit and glory for the interpretation (2:24-30).
 - 2. The dream stated (2:31-35):
 - a. The image of four metals (2:31-33).
 - b. The destroying stone (2:34-35).
 - 3. The dream interpreted (2:36-45):
 - a. The image represents world government.
 - b. The different metals, four successive powers: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome (2:36-43).
 - c. The stone, the kingdom (church) of Christ (2:44-45).
 - F. Nebuchadnezzar honors Daniel and glorifies Jehovah (2:46-49).
 - G. We see God the revealer of the future and the judge of the heathen wisdom.
- III. *Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image and the Faithfulness of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (3:1-30).*
- A. The erection of the image and law of compulsory worship (3:1-7). A kind of "state religion."
 - B. Accusation against Hebrew youths for refusal to participate (3:8-12).
 - C. Their trial before Nebuchadnezzar (3:13-18).
 - D. Their sentence: death by fire (3:19-23).
 - E. Their miraculous preservation (3:24-27).
 - F. Nebuchadnezzar honors their God and promotes

the youths (3:28-30). We see heathen pride and religion judged and God's power to preserve life.

IV. *Nebuchadnezzar's "Tree" Dream and Subsequent Humbling (4:1-37):*

- A. The king's proclamation (4:1-3).
- B. The dream which evoked it (4:4-18).
- C. Daniel interprets the dream (4:19-27). Nebuchadnezzar will be stricken insane seven years, but restored to health and power.
- D. Fulfillment of the judgment (4:28-33).
- E. His restoration and acknowledgement of Jehovah's rule (4:34-37). We see God the humbler of the proud.

V. *Belshazzar's Feast and the Handwriting on the Wall (5:1-31).*

- A. The great feast (5:1-4). Belshazzar's arrogant use of Jehovah's sacred vessels (5:2-3).
- B. The handwriting on the wall (5:5-9):
 - 1. The terror of Belshazzar (5:6).
 - 2. The inability of heathen wise men to interpret the message (5:7-9).
- C. Request to Daniel for help (5:10-16).
- D. The interpretation: the judgment of God upon the king and his nation (5:17-29). Daniel honored (5:29).
- E. Prophecy fulfilled, Belshazzar dies (5:30-31). Thus God avenged his honor.

VI. *Daniel's Preservation in the Den of Lions (6:1-28).*

- A. Daniel elevated to high authority by Darius (6:1-3).
- B. Conspiracy to destroy Daniel (6:4-9).

- C. Accusation and sentencing of Daniel (6:10-17).
- D. Miraculous deliverance of Daniel and destruction of his enemies (6:18-24). We see God's power even over the beasts.
- E. Darius' declaration honoring the God of Daniel (6:25-28). Thus God preserved Daniel from the malice of unbelievers.

OUTLINE OF DANIEL: (Chapters 7-12 are visions of Daniel).

VII. *The Vision of the Four Beasts (first year of Belshazzar) 7:1-28:*

- A. The beasts (7:1-8):
 - 1. Lion, Babylon (7:4).
 - 2. Bear, Medo-Persia (7:5).
 - 3. Leopard, Greece (7:6).
 - 4. The composite beast, Rome (7:7). The little horn, perhaps spiritual Rome (7:8).
- B. The divine judgment of the beasts (7:9-12).
- C. Messiah receives an everlasting kingdom (7:13-14).
- D. The interpretation of the wisdom (7:12-38):
 - 1. God is sovereign over all world government.
 - 2. Ultimately Christ shall reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.

VIII. *The Vision of the Ram and the He-goat (at Susa in the third year of Belshazzar) 8:1-27:*

- A. The vision (8:1-14):
 - 1. The ram with two horns, Medo-Persia Empire (8:3-5).

2. The he-goat, Greece (8:5). The notable horn, Alexander.
 3. The conflict, Greece conquers Persia (8:6-7).
 4. The great horn broken, the four horns (8:8):
 - a. Alexander's untimely death.
 - b. Quartering of the Greek Empire.
 5. The little horn, Antiochus Epiphanes (8:9-14).
- B. Daniel receives the interpretation (8:15-27).
- IX. *Prophecy of Seventy Weeks Revealed by Gabriel (first year of Darius the Mede, 538 B. C.) 9:1-27:*
- A. Historical setting (9:1-3). He read Jer. 25:9-12.
 - B. Daniel's prayer for pardon for his nation (9:4-19).
 - C. God sent Gabriel in answer to the prayer (9:20-23).
 - D. The prophecy of seventy weeks (9:24-27):
 1. A prediction of the interval between the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and the death of Messiah.
 2. The fulfillment of the Mosaic system and the overthrow of the Jewish state.
- X. *Daniel's Final Vision (by the Tigris River in the third year of Cyrus) 10:1 - 12:13:*
- A. Circumstances of the vision (10:1-4).
 - B. The heavenly man appears (10:5 - 11:1):
 1. The heavenly messenger described (10:5-6).
 2. The effect of the experience upon Daniel

- (10:7-9).
- 3. The prophet consoled (10:10-12).
- 4. Infernal opposition revealed, revelation promised (10:13 - 11:1).
- C. Revelations of future political events (11:1 - 12:3):
 - 1. Kings of Persia: Cambyses, Smerdis, Darius Hystaspis, Xerxes (11:2).
 - 2. Alexander and the division of his kingdom (11:3-4):
 - a. Ptolemy Lagus - Egypt.
 - b. Seleucus - Syria, Babylon, Media.
 - c. Lysimachus - Thrace and Bithynia.
 - d. Cassander - Macedon and Greece.
 - 3. Wars between the kings of the south and the north for control of the Holy Land (11:5-20):
 - a. Kings of south, the Ptolemaic dynasty of Egypt.
 - b. Kings of north, the Seleucid empire of Syria.
 - 4. Persecution of Israel by Antiochus IV, Epiphanes (11:21 - 12:3):
 - a. Antiochus Epiphanes' rise to power (11:21-24).
 - b. His campaigns against Egypt (11:25-29).
 - c. His persecution of Israel (11:30-35).
 - d. His arrogance toward God (11:36-39).
 - e. The final conflict (11:40-45).
 - f. The deliverance of Israel (12:1).

- g. The consumation of the world (12:2-3).
- D. The command to seal up the book (12:4).
- E. The time of the fulfillment is explained in enigmatical terms (12:5-13).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. When his children do not heed his instructions, God is forced to use severe discipline.
2. God was and is capable of solving every problem that confronts his people.
3. Jehovah rules in the kingdoms of men.
4. He sets over them whomever he will, even the basest of men.
5. We need the conviction of Daniel when faced with moral and spiritual challenges.
6. God's men were ready to die for their principles rather than compromise.
7. The God of the universe controls governments, creatures and elements for the protection of his people.
8. The most powerful world governments are destined to fall.
9. The kingdom of Christ is an everlasting, world-wide kingdom.
10. Daniel teaches the power of fervent prayer.
11. The angels of God serve on behalf of God's people.
12. The influence of a faithful child of God can be exercised in the highest positions

- of society.
13. Only God knows the future as well as the present.
 14. We see the beauty of courageous youth and faithful old age in Daniel.
 15. In Daniel we see the humility of a truly great and wise man.
 16. May we live that our enemies can make only exceptions against our faithfulness.
 17. We all have two prospects for the resurrection: everlasting life or everlasting contempt.
 18. They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever.

APPENDIX A

Parallels to Daniel in the Revelation of John

Compiled by: Joseph Angus

1. Dan. 2:44, “the kingdom of God,” Rev. 11:15; 12:10.
2. Dan. 5:4, 23, description of idolatry, Rev. 9:20.
3. Dan. 7:7, 8, 21, 24, the beast with horns, Rev. 13:1-7.
4. Dan. 7:9, the thrones, Rev. 20:4.
5. Dan. 7:9, “the Ancient Days,” Rev. 1:8.
6. Dan. 7:10, the ministering myriads, Rev. 5:11.
7. Dan. 7:13, the final advent, Rev. 1:7; 14:14.
8. Dan. 7:22, “judgment given to the saints,” Rev. 20:4.
9. Dan. 7:25; 12:7, “a time, times, half a time,” Rev. 12:14.
10. Dan. 8:10, falling stars, Rev. 12:4.
11. Dan. 12:4; 8:26, the vision to be sealed, Rev. 10:4; 22:10.
12. Dan. 10:5, 6, the divine man, Rev. 2:18; 19:12.
13. Dan. 10:13, 21, “Michael the prince,” Rev. 12:7.
14. Dan. 12:1, the great tribulation, Rev. 7:14.
15. Dan. 12:1, “the book of life,” Rev. 17:8; 20:15; 21:27.

16. Dan. 12:7, the angelic oath, Rev. 10:5-6.

APPENDIX B

Chronological Tables Relating to Daniel

R. H. Charles, Edited by: John Waddey

I. *Neo-Babylonian Kings and Notable Events* B. C.

Nabopolassar: At first a viceroy of Babylon under the sons and successors of Assurbani-pal, but subsequently the king of and independent ruler of Babylon on the destruction of the Assyrian empire by the Medes 625-605

Nebuchadnezzar, as crown prince, defeats the Egyptian forces at Carchemish (Jer. 46:2) on the Euphrates and recovers all Western Asia 605

Nebuchadnezzar: King of the Chaldeans . . . and of Babylon 604-561

Amel-Marduk, i.e., Evil-Merodach (II Kings 25:27 ff) son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar 561-559

Nergal-Sharezer (Neriglissar), having assassinated his brother-in-law Amel-Marduk, reigned 559-556

B. C.

Labashi-Marduk, son of Nergal-Sharezer, reigned only nine months, being murdered by his nobles	556-555
Nabuna'id, the last king of the Chaldeans, seized the throne and became king. Belshazzar reigned as co-regent	555-538
Cyrus, King of Anshan (558), overthrows the Median empire (550), becomes king of Persia circa 547, takes Nabuna'id, and makes himself master of Babylon, over which Belshazzar, son of Nabuna'id, had been governor	538
Cyrus thus becomes king of Babylon	538-529
Darius the Mede, rules Babylon as interim until Cyrus comes.	
Cambyses, his son, becomes king	529
Conquers Egypt (which remains a province of Persia till 332)	525
Darius I, Hystaspes, king of Persia	521-486
Xerxes (Ahasuerus in O. T.)	485-465
Artaxerxes	465-425

B. C.

Darius II, Nothus	424-404
Artaxerxes II, Mnemon	404-359
Artaxerxes III, Ochus	359-338
Darius III, Codomanus	336-331
Conquered by Alexander	331

II. *The Earlier Seleucidae. The Empire of the Seleucidae over Syria and Babylon founded by:*

Seleucus I, Nicator	312-280
Antiochus I, Soter	279-261
Antiochus II, Theos	261-246
Seleucus II, Callinicus	246-226
Seleucus III, Ceraunus	226-223
Antiochus III, the Great	222-187
Seleucus IV, Philopator	186-176
Antiochus IV, Epiphanes	175-164

B. C.

III. *The Earlier Ptolemies.*

Ptolemy I, Soter, became ruler of Egypt . . .	332-285
Ptolemy II, Philadelphus	285-247
Ptolemy III, Euergetes I	247-222
Ptolemy IV, Philopator	222-205
Ptolemy V, Epiphanes	205-182
Ptolemy (VI), Eupator	182
Ptolemy VI (VII), Philometor, sole king . . .	182-170
Ptolemy Philometor] reigning con- jointly
Ptolemy VII, Euergetes, II	
Ptolemy Philometor, sole king	164-146

IV. *Events in Jewish History From the Time of Jehoiakim to the Death of Antiochus Epiphanes.*

Jehoiakim rebels against Nebuchadnezzar . . .	602
Judea laid waste by the inroads of	

hostile nations including the Chaldeans (II Kings 24:1-4). According to II Chronicles 36:6, 7 Nebuchadnezzar himself invades Judea.

Jehoiakim carried captive to Babylon with all the sacred vessels of the Temple	597
Captivity of Zedekiah and destruction of Jerusalem	586
First return of exiles under Cyrus	536
Second return with Ezra	458
Conquest of Palestine by Alexander the Great	332
Struggle between Ptolemy I and Anti- ochus over the possession of Pales- tine, which results in Palestine be- coming a province of Egypt for nearly 100 years	301
The marriage of Antiochus II with Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy II (Dan. 11:6)	248

B. C.

Fresh wars between Ptolemy III and Seleucus II (Dan. 11:7 ff)	246
Antiochus III makes himself master of Palestine but is forced to retire from it through his defeat at Raphia by Ptolemy IV	217
Conquest of Palestine by Antiochus III	202
Despite the attempts of Egypt (200 B. C.) this conquest maintained (Dan. 11:13 ff)	198
Cleopatra, daughter of Antiochus III, married to Ptolemy V (Dan. 11:17)	197
Seleucus IV, acting on information given by Simon, who was at strife with the High Priest Onias III, attempts to make himself master of the Temple treasures through his chief minister Heliodorus (Dan. 11:20)	176
Accession of Antiochus IV to the throne of Syria (Dan. 8:9, 23; 11:21)	176
The High Priest, Onias III, leader of the Chasidim, deposed by Antiochus, and	

B. C.

his brother Jason, the leader of the hel- lenizing Jews, appointed in his stead	175
Jason deposed in favor of Menelaus and Onias III murdered at the instigation of the latter (Dan. 11:22; I Enoch 90:8; II Macc. 4:33-35)	171
Antiochus IV invades Egypt in a cam- paign, the first stage of which end- ed with the victory near Pelusium, and the second with the conquest of Egypt (Dan. 11:25-27; I Macc. 1:16-18). Jason having in the meantime reinstated himself in Jerusalem by force, Antiochus on his return from Egypt expels him, plunders the Temple, and massa- cres many Jews (Dan. 8:9b-10; 11:28; I Macc. 1:21-28)	170
Antiochus making his second expedi- tion against Egypt, obliged to re- tire before the Roman legate Popi- lius Laenas, and to give up his claims on the country	169
Jerusalem taken by surprise by Apolonius	

B. C.

- on the Sabbath day, many Jews slaughtered or driven into exile, and a Syrian garrison established in the Citadel. The complete suppression of the Jewish religion ordered by Antiochus. The observance of the Sabbath and circumcision forbidden. Books of the Law burnt, the daily sacrifice abolished, and a heathen altar, i.e., 'The Abomination of Desolation,' set up in the Temple on the 15th of Chisleu (December) 168 (Dan. 8:11, 12, 13b, 24, 25; 11:30b-35) 169-168
- The revolt of the Jews against Antiochus under Mattathias and his sons (Dan. 11:37; I Enoch 90:9 sqq; I Macc. 2) 167
- The death of Mattathias. Judas, his son, defeats and slays the Syrian generals Apollonius and Seron (I Macc. 3:1-24) and subsequently routs Gorgias at Emmaus (I Macc. 3:25-4:27) and Lysias at Beth-Zur (I Macc. 4:28-35) 166-165
- Recovery of Jerusalem, with the exception of the citadel. The cleansing and rededication of the Temple on the 25th of Chisleu, three years and ten days after its

B. C.

desecration. Successful invasion of Edomites, Philistines, and other Gentile nations (I Macc. 5) 165

Antiochus, owing to lack of money, attempts to pillage a temple in Elymais in Persia, but is beaten off by the inhabitants of the town, and soon afterwards dies at Taboe in that same country (Dan. 8:14b, 25; 11:45b) 164

Charles, R. H. *The Century Bible, Daniel*, Edinburgh, no date.

HOSEA — PROPHET WITH A BROKEN HEART

- Key Verses:* 14:1 - "O Israel, return unto Jehovah thy God: for thou hast fallen by thy iniquity."
14:4 - "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely . . ."
- Key Words:* "Return" used 15 times.
"Whoredom" used 16 times, referring not only to Israel's immorality, but also to her unfaithfulness to God.
- Key Thought:* Jehovah's loving faithfulness to Israel and her thankless infidelity in return.
- Key Characters:* Hosea, God's prophet, and his unfaithful wife, Gomer.
Jehovah, the God of love, and his unfaithful bride, the nation of Israel.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

- I. *The Author:*
 - A. It is "the word of Jehovah that came to Hosea, the son of Beeri . . ." (1:1).
 - B. About the author:
 1. His father was named Beeri who is otherwise unknown.
 2. We know nothing of Hosea's birth, early life, or call to his office.
 3. He was a citizen of the northern kingdom of Israel.

4. His name means "salvation" and is from the same Hebrew root as Joshua and Jesus.
 5. His ministry began in the reigns of Jeroboam II (770-749 B. C.) and Uzziah (792-740) and continued unto the days of Hezekiah (728-697 B. C.), (1:1):
 - a. His ministry could have lasted 70 years.
 - b. His death would have come in his nineties.
 6. He was a sad man, deeply affectionate, yet frank.
 7. He was a poet of the highest order.
 8. He experienced heart-breaking family problems.
- C. His family:
1. His wife was Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim.
 - a. Following their marriage she proved unfaithful and left her home.
 - b. She fell to the depths of immorality and was finally sold into prostitution.
 - c. With loving pity, Hosea bought her back and took her home.
 2. Three children (1:3-9):
 - a. Jezreel, whose name meant "vengeance." A day of vengeance was coming upon the dynasty of Jehu and the nation (1:4-5).
 - b. Lo-Ruhamah, which meant "not pitied" or "no more mercy." The

nation's day of grace was rapidly drawing to a close.

- c. Lo-Ammi, which meant "not my people." Israel had forfeited her position as God's people. It is obvious in this son's name that Hosea questioned whether the son was his.
- d. In future days, the nation's fortune would change:
 - 1) They would answer Jezreel, for it also meant "whom God soweth," indicating prosperity would return.
 - 2) She who had lost God's mercy would now find it, Ruhamah.
 - 3) She that had been declared "not God's people" would once again be his people (Lo-Ammi).
 - 4) See 2:21-23.

D. His ministry:

- 1. His message was to northern Israel. Over 35 times he addresses Ephraim, the principal tribe.
- 2. He was the first prophet of and to the north, whose message was preserved in written form and the last to prophesy before its collapse.
- 3. He has been called the prophet of the decline and fall of Israel.
- 4. In his own domestic heartbreak and sorrow, Hosea saw how God felt about

- backsliding Israel who had played the harlot with idols and false religion.
5. His own sad experience became the foundation of his message to his people.
 6. Hosea was the first Hebrew prophet to set forth the great love of God, later fully revealed in Christ.
 7. His personal experience taught him two unforgettable lessons: Jehovah's undying love for Israel and her unfaithfulness to him.
 8. He condemned the moral and spiritual degeneracy of the nation, using his own family problems to illustrate the depths of their sin.
 9. He was a preacher of repentance, calling his people back to their God.
 10. He was a keen student of his nation's foreign affairs. (Notice 5:13; 7:11; 10:14; 11:5, 11; 12:1; 14:3).
 11. He was the home missionary to Israel while Jonah was the foreign missionary to Nineveh.

II. *The Background of Hosea's Work:*

- A. His work was done during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah of Judah and Jeroboam II of Israel — approximately 800-722 B. C. (See Appendix A for a chart and chronology of Israel's kings).
- B. Socially, Jeroboam's reign was one of peace, plenty, prosperity and luxury. People lived a

- life of ease, extravagance, and moral corruption.
 - 1. Courts were corrupt.
 - 2. Bloodshed and violence were visible on every hand.
 - 3. Family life was disintegrating.
- C. Religion was at low tide. Religious leaders eagerly joined the masses in their sin.
 - 1. Formal ritualism was practiced to maintain respectability.
 - 2. Jehovah's worship was mixed with pagan practices of Baal worship.
 - 3. Folks thought they were loyal to God when really they were idolatrous pagans.
- D. The moral climate was terribly degenerate. Swearing, breaking faith, murder, stealing, adultery, lying, drunkenness and dishonesty were common practices (4:2, 11, 12; 10:4).
- E. Politically, Jeroboam II ruled Israel as a military despot.
 - 1. Following his reign, civil strife and anarchy prevailed.
 - 2. Of the next six kings, only Menahem died naturally.
 - 3. The nation was in the throes of death.
 - 4. Conspiracy was the common norm.
- F. Mighty Assyria invaded Israel in 732 B. C. and took all the land but Samaria.
 - 1. In 722, Samaria fell to Sargon II after a lengthy siege.
 - 2. They deported 27,280 Israelites to labor camps.

- G. Contemporaries of Hosea were:
 - 1. Amos in Israel.
 - 2. Isaiah and Micah in Judah.
- H. The historical background may be found in I Kings 15:8 - 18:12.

III. *About the Book:*

- A. It bears the name of its inspired author.
- B. Literary qualities:
 - 1. His book consists of a number of short oracles or lessons delivered at different times and later compiled as we have them. The material seems to reflect the experiences of many years.
 - 2. Impassioned emotions, rather than logical arguments, best describe his book.
 - a. It is "a succession of sighs — a prophetic voice from the depths of human misery." Dean Stanley.
 - b. "It is a succession of sobs." A. B. Davidson.
 - 3. Many commentators feel that in terms of the language, Hosea is the most obscure and difficult to interpret.
 - 4. He loved to make puns or to play on the meaning of words. Compare:
 - a. 1:4-10, the names of his children.
 - b. 1:11, Jezreel means "whom God soweth" in this context.
 - c. 4:15, Bethel, the house of God, he changes to Bethaven, house of vanity.
 - d. 2:16, Baali, a proper term for Master,

would be rejected because it would remind them of Baalism.

C. Hosea and the New Testament:

1. He is quoted more than 30 times in the New Testament, more than any other Minor Prophet.
2. A beautiful Messianic prophecy is seen in 3:5. He predicts that Israel shall return and seek Jehovah and David, their king, in the latter days.
3. "Not my people" (1:10; 2:23; see Rom. 9:25; I Pet. 2:10).
4. "I desired mercy and not sacrifice" (6:6; see Matt. 9:13; 12:7).
5. "Out of Egypt have I called my son," (11:1; see Matt. 2:15). This is obviously a typical application.
6. "O death, where are thy plagues . . . ?" (13:14; see I Cor. 15:55-56).

D. Purposes:

1. To make his people realize the awfulness of their sin and the jeopardy in which they stood (4:1-3).
2. To bring them to repentance and restoration to God (14:1-3).
3. To set forth the great love of God for his people and to convince them of its reality.

E. Hosea and the Liberal Critics:

1. As we would expect, these self-appointed critics attack the book and seek to dissect and discredit its message.

2. They argue that all references to the southern kingdom of Judah must be by some later southern editor. Of course, they offer no proof.
 3. For a thorough refutation of their case, see *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* by G. L. Archer, Jr.
- F. Miscellaneous Facts About the Book:
1. Hosea is listed first among the twelve books of the Minor Prophets, not because of antiquity or superiority, but because of its greater length.
 2. In 1:3 we read that Gomer “bare *him* a son,” but in 1:6 and 8, she conceived and bare a daughter and a son. No mention is made of Hosea, the father. Some conclude they were not his children. They argue that his name for the last child makes this obvious: “Lo-ammi; for ye are not my people” (1:9).
 3. “Valley of Achor for a door of hope” (2:15).
 - a. He alludes to a vale near Jericho where the Hebrews executed God’s judgments on Achan. Yet out of this bitter experience, they went on to conquer the land — thus a door of hope.
 - b. See Josh. 7:1-26.
 4. “Thou shalt call me Ishi; and shalt call me no more Baali” (2:16).

- a. Ishi means “my husband” and is a title of love.
 - b. Baali means “my Lord” and suggests subjection and fear.
 - c. Though Baali was a legitimate term, it had been corrupted in Baal worship.
 - d. In coming days, they would no longer use it, since it reminded them of their idolatrous past.
5. He bought Gomer back for 15 pieces of silver and a homer of barley, and a half-homer of barley (3:2).
 - a. This was the price of a common slave.
 - b. See Ex. 21:32.
6. Baal was the male fertility god of the Canaanites which Israel had adopted. He was symbolized by the sun.
 - a. Ashtaroth was the female counterpart of Baal.
 - b. They were worshipped with ritual fornication, gluttony, and drunkenness.
 - c. Sacrifice of children was sometimes practiced.
7. Syncretism is the blending and mingling of two different religions. In this case, they added Baal worship to their Jehovah worship.
 - a. The people assumed they were still loyal to Jehovah.
 - b. God rejected them as pagans.

8. Bethel, a city of Israel, meant “house of God.” In sarcasm he called it Bethaven — “house of vanity” — since they worshipped idols there (10:4).
 9. “The prophets felt that God did more than just ordain moral laws which, like the law of gravity, men might break at their own risk. Rather, they believed that God himself was acting in the sphere of history, meeting his people in events, and using agencies (like Assyria) to bring his people to their senses.” Bernhard Anderson.
- G. Gomer’s moral state at the time of her marriage: Three views are set forth by different scholars.
1. “Take unto thee a wife of whoredom” (1:2), is taken literally by some.
 - a. Baal worship had made such conduct respectable.
 - b. Multitudes of women were associated with the Baal temples as “sacred prostitutes.”
 - c. Most cannot believe that God would place such an evil burden on his prophet’s shoulders.
 2. Some view the story as a parable, i.e., they think it did not really happen. They see it as simply a story to illustrate the nature of Israel’s unfaithfulness to God.
 3. The majority holds that she was a decent woman at the time of her marriage, but became immoral afterwards. She had

absorbed such an attitude living in such a degenerate society. This would be the present author's view.

H. What great men have said about Hosea:

1. "We must reckon him among the greatest religious geniuses which the world has ever produced." C. H. Cornill.
2. "In all the world's literature, there is no record of human love like that of Hosea." George Robinson.
3. "No prophet of Israel outranked him in appreciation of the eternal mercy." Cadman.
4. "For pathos and beauty, his book is unsurpassed in the Old Testament." Harrell.
5. "His words are struck out on the anvil of a suffering human heart." John Patterson.
6. "In coming near to Hosea, we come very near to Christ." Merrill.

IV. *Portraits Hosea Painted in Words:*

A. Portrait of sinners:

1. Like an adulterous wife (3:1).
2. Like a drunkard (4:11).
3. Like troops of robbers (6:9).
4. Like a half-baked cake (7:8).
5. Like a silly dove (7:11).
6. Like a warped, dangerous bow (7:16).
7. Like a wild ass (8:9).

B. The steps of a falling nation:

1. Ignorance of God's word (4:6).
2. False pride (5:5).

3. Instability (6:4).
 4. Compromise (7:8).
 5. Corruption (9:9).
 6. Apostasy (11:7).
 7. Idolatry (13:2).
 8. Destruction (13:1).
- C. God's indictment of the nation:
1. No truth, mercy, or knowledge of God among them (4:1).
 2. Religious leaders encouraged sin rather than rebuke it (4:4-11).
 3. They sought guidance from the world (4:12-14).
 4. They lost their moral perception (4:13-15).
 5. Religious and political leaders led the way in sin (5:1-2).
 6. Their goodness was a facade for hypocrisy (6:4; 10:2).
 7. They were unstable (7:11).
 8. They were filled with false pride (12:8).
- V. *Two Simple Analyses of Hosea:*
- A. The sin against trust (1:1 - 3:5).
 The sin against truth (4:1 - 6:11).
 The sin against troth (7:1 - 13:16).
 The final appeal (14:1-9).
 - B. Hosea's personal experience (chapters 1-3). His message to an unfaithful nation (chapters 4-14).

OUTLINE OF HOSEA:

Introduction: (1:1).

- I. *First Discourse: His Marriage and Family (1:2-11).*
 - A. The prophet's domestic history and the message of doom expressed by the names of his children (1:2-9).
 - B. Prophetic hope of the future blessings under Christ (1:10-11).
- II. *Second Discourse: Unfaithfulness Condemned (2:1-23).*
 - A. The prophet casts out his adulterous wife, hoping to save her (2:1-7).
 - B. Gomer's sin typical of Israel's sins (2:8-13).
 - C. The discipline of national calamity is intended to make Israel accept God's invitation to restoration (2:14-20).
 - D. The future blessings of the righteous remnant (2:21-23).
- III. *Third Discourse: The Broken Marriage Restored (3:1-5).*
 - A. Gomer, redeemed (3:1-3).
 - B. Discipline now, makes possible salvation in the latter days (3:4-5).
 - C. The Oracles of the Prophet to Israel (4:1 - 14:9).
- IV. *Fourth Discourse: The Cause of National Decay and Decline (4:1-19).*
 - A. Lack of knowledge destroys the social, moral fabric of society (4:1-5).
 - B. Lack of knowledge led the religious leaders into terrible sin (4:6-10).
 - C. Lack of knowledge led the masses into idolatry (4:11-14).
 - D. Warning to Judah, to avoid Ephraim's sins of

ignorance and stubbornness (4:15-19).

- V. *Fifth Discourse: To the Nation's Leaders (5:1-15).*
 - A. Condemnation of religious and political leaders (5:1-7).
 - B. The judgment of God's wrath described (5:8-14):
 - 1. Israel shall be crushed by war.
 - 2. Judah shall suffer also.
 - C. Purpose of the judgment (5:15).
- VI. *Sixth Discourse: God's Plea to Israel to Return (6:1 - 7:16):*
 - A. Israel's surface repentance (6:1-3).
 - B. God exposes her double-mindedness (6:4-11).
 - C. Israel's wickedness uncovered (7:1-7).
 - D. The foolishness of Ephraim's conduct (7:8-16).
- VII. *Seventh Discourse: Judgment Announced (8:1-9:17).*
 - A. Destruction will come because of: (8:1-14).
 - 1. Kings God did not approve of (8:1-4a).
 - 2. Idolatry (8:4b-7).
 - 3. Foolishness (8:8-10).
 - 4. Ignorance of God's will (8:11-14).
 - B. Captivity will come because of corruption (9:1-9).
 - C. Fruitful Israel will be unfruitful (9:10-17).
- VIII. *Eighth Discourse: Repent or Perish (10:1-15).*
 - A. Another oracle pronouncing Israel's judgment: (10:1-8).
 - 1. Her sins enumerated (10:1-4).
 - 2. Assyria will destroy her kings and idols (10:5-8).
 - B. God protests that Israel had sinned from the

beginning (10:9-11).

- C. He pleads for them to “break up their fallow ground” and sow righteousness (10:12-15).

IX. *Ninth Discourse: God’s Tender Love for his People (11:1-11).*

- A. The great love of God for Israel (11:1-4).
- B. Their backsliding would take them to Assyria (11:5-7).
- C. God’s dilemma of love and justice (11:8).
- D. God’s resolution will be captivity and restoration (11:9-11).

X. *Tenth Discourse: Fruitful Ephraim Will Become Unfruitful (11:12 - 13:16).*

- A. Ephraim’s sins and God’s pleadings (11:12 - 12:9).
 - 1. Falsehood.
 - 2. Covenants with foreign powers.
 - 3. Deceitful business practices.
 - 4. Oppression.
 - 5. They believed they were above judgment.
 - 6. Idolatry.
 - 7. Forgetful of God.
 - 8. Against God.
- B. He pled by the prophets (12:10-14).
- C. He urged them to turn to God and avoid self-destruction (13:1-16).

XI. *Eleventh Discourse: God’s Final Plea (14:1-9).*

- A. God’s final plea for repentance (14:1-3).
- B. If they will turn, he will heal (14:4-8).
- C. Closing admonition (14:9).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. Nothing is able to quench God's love for us.
2. God suffers intense sorrow when men desert him.
3. The sacredness and sanctity of marriage typify our relationship with Jehovah.
4. The consequences of following unworthy teachers are tragic.
5. There can be no "double standard" of morals in God's kingdom.
6. A nation declines rapidly when its leaders become corrupt.
7. Internal corruption in a nation is more dangerous to its existence than foreign enemies.
8. The greatest sin is that against true love.
9. There is a real danger of becoming like those we associate with (I Cor. 15:33).
10. The root from which all sins spring is unfaithfulness to God.
11. Genuine repentance will bring forgiveness and full restoration to God's favor.
12. There is beauty in forgiving those who sin against us (Matt. 6:12-14).
13. The crushing blows of life can drive us to the arms of God.
14. "Who is he that he may understand these things? prudent that he may know them? for the ways of Jehovah are right, and the

- just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein.” (Hosea 14:9).
15. Our goodness must be more permanent than the morning cloud — fog and early dew (6:4).
 16. May we not be half-baked Christians — burned on one side, mushy on top — and therefore useless (7:8).
 17. All “these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (I Cor. 10:11).
 18. God still prefers goodness to heartless sacrifice (6:6).
 19. May we, like Hosea, be a living demonstration of our message.
 20. Corruption in politics is bad, but in religion it is inexcusable.
 21. God is not willing that any should perish, especially his children (II Pet. 3:9).
 22. “It appears to be a universal law of this sin-stricken world that God makes perfect through suffering, that redemption is wrought through sacrifice.” Eiselen.

APPENDIX A
A Chronology of Israel's Kings

(Note: There is much conjecture about the dates of the kings).

B. C.

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 843 | Jehu |
| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Smote Joram, son of Ahab and Ahaziah, king of Judah (II Kings 9:21-28).2. He killed Jezebel and Ahab's heirs and slaughtered the worshippers of Baal (II Kings 9:30 - 10:28). |
| 816 | Jehoahaz (II Kings 13:1-9). |
| 799 | Joash (II Kings 13:10-13). |
| 784 | Jeroboam II (II Kings 14:23-29). Ruled 41 years. |
| 741 | Zechariah (II Kings 15:8-12). |
| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Reigned 6 months before being assassinated by Shallum.2. He was the last of Jehu's heirs to rule. |
| 741 | Shallum (II Kings 15:13-16). |
| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Reigned one month.2. Deposed by Menahem. |

B. C.

- 741 Menahem (II Kings 15:17-22).
1. Ruled 10 years.
 2. His kingdom was invaded by Tiglath-pileser (Pul), king of Assyria.
 3. He died a natural death.
- 737 Pekahiah (II Kings 15:17-22).
1. He reigned two years.
 2. He was murdered by Pekah, captain of his guard.
 3. Thus ended the seventh dynasty.
- 736 Pekah (II Kings 15:27 - 16:9).
1. In his reign Tiglath-pileser captured large portions of Israel and deported her citizens.
 2. Pekah looked to Egypt for help.
 3. He and Rezin, king of Damascus, conspired to overthrow Ahaz, king of Judah.
 4. He was murdered by Hoshea.
- 729 Hoshea (II Kings 17:1-6).
1. He paid tribute to Assyria.
 2. Shalmaneser V had him arrested.
 3. Later, Sargon took Samaria.
 4. They deported 27,280 souls.
 5. The northern kingdom of Israel was destroyed.

JOEL – THE PROPHET OF PENTECOST

- Key Verses:* 1:15 - “Alas for the day! for the day of Jehovah is at hand . . .”
2:28 - “And it shall come to pass, afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh . . .”
- Key Phrase:* “Day of the Lord” (1:15; 2:1, 11, etc.).

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. *The Author:*

- A. The prophet whose name it bears (1:1). Confirmed by Peter through inspiration (Acts 2: 16-17).
- B. About the author:
 - 1. His father was Pethuel (1:1).
 - 2. His name, Jo-el, means “Jehovah is God.”
 - 3. All we know of him is found in this book.
 - 4. It is probable that he was a citizen of Judah.
 - 5. Some have conjectured that he might have been a priest.
 - 6. He was a very poetic, prayerful man and a prophet of the highest order.
 - 7. He was a bold, powerful, eloquent preacher of God.
 - 8. He has been called “the prophet of religious revival.”

II. *The Background of His Ministry:*

A. Date:

1. The author nowhere dates his message.
2. Great diversity is reflected in the dates suggested — some as early as 900, others as late as 350 B. C.
3. We will assume the book was most likely written during the reign of King Joash, 830-810 B. C.
 - a. For an excellent defense of the early date, see *The Doctrine of the Prophets* by A. F. Kirkpatrick.
 - b. Its place in the Hebrew canon shows that the ancient rabbis viewed Joel as from an early date.

B. His contemporaries:

1. In his youth, Elijah and Elisha.
2. In his old age, possibly Hosea.

C. Politically:

1. Both northern and southern kingdoms had recently thrown off the devastating power of Ahab and Jezebel and her daughter, Athaliah.
2. King Joash was a child of 7 when crowned.
3. The nation was guided by Jehoiada, the high priest who served as regent.
4. Jehu was seeking to stamp out the last vestiges of Jezebel's influence in the north.
5. Both nations were at a low spiritual ebb.
6. Hazael, the cruel king of Syria, was fast becoming a terror to all his neighbors.
7. Shalmaneser III of Assyria was launching a

drive to conquer the west.

8. Immediate enemies Joel's people faced:
 - a. Phoenicians (3:4). They sold Hebrew prisoners into slavery (Amos 1:6-9).
 - b. Philistines (3:4). They joined with the Arabians in invading Judah and sacking Jerusalem (II Chron. 21:16ff).
 - c. Egyptians (3:19). They were perennial enemies of the Hebrews (I Kings 14:25).
 - d. Edomites (3:19). They had revolted against Israel's rule in approximately 848 B. C. (I Kings 8:20-22).
9. Scripture background: II Kings 9:1 - 13:9.

III. *The Occasion:*

- A. A devastating plague of locusts had ravaged the land. Successive waves of them had stripped the land bare.
 1. A drought had followed upon the heels of the plague.
 2. Famine stalked the countryside.
 3. The situation was so severe that the daily sacrificial ritual at the temple ceased for lack of provisions (1:9).
- B. About the locusts:
 1. Locusts are grasshoppers.
 2. Plagues of locusts were among the punishments of God most feared by the Hebrews.
 3. Solomon prayed that God would deliver them from the locusts (I Kings 8:37).
 4. A locust can eat its own weight, daily.

5. A female will lay up to 225 eggs in her lifetime.
6. During a plague, from 100-200 million will be found in a square mile. Swarms have been documented that covered more than 400 square miles.
7. In such numbers they devour every green thing, even the bark of the trees. They have been known to attack babies.
8. Before the age of pesticides and airplane dusting, people and nations were helpless before these hordes.
9. For a good study on locusts see the article: "Locusts: Teeth of the Wind" by R. A. M. Conley, *National Geographic*, Vol. 136, No. 2, Aug. 1969.

IV. *About the Book:*

- A. It is named for its author.
- B. Literary characteristics:
 1. He writes in a poetic style.
 2. The chief characteristic of his style is his simple vividness.
 3. His production is a literary gem.
- C. His purposes:
 1. To interpret the natural disaster of the locusts as a judgment from God and thereby bring the nation to repentance.
 2. To help Israel see beyond the plague to the God of discipline.
 3. To announce the coming day of Jehovah and what will happen at that time.

D. His message:

1. Such a natural calamity, so terrible and overwhelming, so far beyond the normal bounds, can be explained only as a divine judgment.
2. Unless there is repentance and righteousness of life on the part of the nation, the locusts will be followed by a stronger, more severe judgment.
3. Joel stresses the spiritual impact of the plague more than he does the economic.
4. The doom of the heathen nations and the ultimate glory of Jehovah's cause.

E. Joel and the New Testament:

1. Joel 2:28-32 is quoted by Peter as having been fulfilled by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4, 16-21).
 - a. Those who hold to the various pre-millennial theories frequently deny this was fulfilled on Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2.
 - b. When an inspired man says "this is that which was spoken through" a prophet, that is that! (Acts 2:16).
2. Paul cites the closing words of Joel 2:32 in Rom. 10:13.
3. John uses the locust as a symbol of a destroying army in Rev. 9:7-9.

F. Miscellaneous facts about Joel's book:

1. He was the prophet of Pentecost, even as

Isaiah was of the Messiah.

2. In his prediction of the coming of the Holy Spirit, he may have thought of a fulfillment of Moses' wish: "would God that all Jehovah's people were prophets, that Jehovah would put his Spirit upon them" (Num. 11:29).
 3. Joel is quoted by Amos, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Obadiah, Ezekiel, Malachi and some of the psalmists.
 - a. This is based on the assumption of an early date.
 - b. Some 27 of his 73 verses are found in other Old Testament books.
 4. Some time must have elapsed between the first and second sections (1:1 - 2:27 and 2:28 - 3:21). The prophet records the Lord's answer to their prayers.
 5. Joel deals with moral issues less than any other prophet.
 6. His book seems to report one episode, rather than the record of his entire ministry.
- G. Important concepts in Joel:
1. Palmer-worm, locusts, cankerworm and caterpillar (1:4).
 - a. Probably refers to different kinds of locusts, or locusts in different stages of growth.
 - b. Locusts pass through five stages of development: egg, larva, pupa, young

flier, mature flier.

- c. Driver renders the words: shearer, swarmer, lapper and finisher.
- d. Haupt translates the passage:

“What the (old locust) left,
the (newly hatched) hopper ate;
What the hopper left,
the (pupa) crawler ate,
What the crawler left,
the (mature) flier ate.”

- e. Three views of the locusts:
 - 1) Allegorical. This views them as figurative of hostile nations.
 - 2) Apocalyptic. This sees them symbolizing the awful judgments of the end time.
 - 3) Historical. An actual locust plague is being discussed. We subscribe to this view.
- 2. “The day of Jehovah,” i.e., the Lord (1: 15).
 - a. The “day of Jehovah” is not used exclusively for the final judgment. Any and every major divine intervention, especially one that involved judgment, foreshadowed the final judgment of God, hence was called a “day of the Lord.”
 - b. The day of Jehovah will bring both

blessings and curses.

- 1) As God destroyed and drove out the locusts, so will he destroy Israel's political enemies.
 - 2) As he poured out an abundance of refreshing rain on the parched ground, so will he pour forth of his Spirit in latter days.
 - 3) That he delivered those who called upon him in Joel's day is proof he will deliver those who call upon him in the great day of judgment. (Compare 2:18-19 with 2:32).
3. "Israel" (2:27). Joel uses the word "Israel" to refer to the southern kingdom of Judah, not the breakaway northern kingdom.
 4. "The sons of Javan" (3:6, KJV).
 - a. Sons of the Grecians (ASV).
 - b. The Ionian Greeks had engaged in the slavery business using Jewish captives.
 5. "Valley of Jehoshaphat" (3:12).
 - a. The valley of Kidron between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives was not so named until the times of Jerome and Eusebius in the fourth century A. D.
 - b. It likely refers to the scene of King Jehoshaphat's victory over the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites in

- the wilderness of Judah below Engedi.
6. Jehoshaphat means "Jehovah judges." The context shows that to be the significance of the name.
- H. What great men have said about Joel:
1. "In a literary and poetical point of view, Joel's prophecy is one of the most beautiful productions of Hebrew literature." F. Bleek.
 2. "As a lyrical poet, he stands among the best of the Old Testament, being graphic, terse, and exceedingly effective." J. Brewer.
- V. *A Simple Summary of Joel:*
- A. Devastation, the divine judgment (1:1 - 2:11).
 - B. The call to repentance (2:12-17).
 - C. The promise of restoration (2:18 - 3:21).

OUTLINE OF JOEL:

- I. *The Natural Calamity and Its Meaning (1:1 - 2:27).*
- A. The prophet describes the locust devastation (1:1 - 2:11).
 1. The call to contemplation (1:1-12).
 2. Charge to the priests (1:13-14).
 3. Words of mourning (1:15-20).
 - B. Sound the alarm (2:1-11).
 1. The locusts are a judgment of God (2:1-2).
 2. The destruction and destroyer described (2:3-11).
 - C. The call to repentance (2:12-17).
 - D. The promise of restoration by God (2:18-27).

1. The enemy was driven out and destroyed (2:18-20).
 2. The land was restored to productivity (2:21-27).
- II. *Things Yet to Come: The Day of Jehovah (2:28 - 3:21).*
- A. “I will pour forth my spirit on all flesh” (2:28-32).
 1. This was Moses’ wish (Num. 11:29).
 2. It was fulfilled beginning at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-8, 12-21, 37-40).
 - B. Israel shall be *blest in those* latter days (3:1-2).
 - C. Her enemies shall be recompensed (3:2-8).
 - D. The final conflict in the valley of decision (3:9-17).
 1. The enemies of God are challenged to meet him (3:9).
 2. The last judgment (3:12-17).
 - E. Consequences of the judgment (3:18-21).
 1. The eternal blessings of God’s faithful ones (3:18).
 2. The destruction of God’s enemies (3:19).
 3. The suffering of God’s people will be avenged (3:20-21).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. God executes his judgments by his agents in the natural world . . . such as locusts . . . and thus displays his justice and omnipotence as moral governor of the world.

2. How can man hope to resist God when he can use the smallest of creatures to accomplish his will?
3. Disasters help turn us to the Lord and make us receptive to his word.
4. A sensation of our dependence on God makes for a true religious revival.
5. God wants contrite hearts, not just torn garments. A broken heart is the only sound heart.
6. Genuine repentance gives God a chance to send blessings instead of calamities.
7. The day of the Lord's judgment is *inevitable* for all. None can evade it.
8. The only way to escape destruction is through repentance.
9. The enemies of God's people are God's enemies. He will war in behalf of his people.
10. National prayer and mourning can avert national calamities.
11. God's people will abide forever in the blessed land — but his enemies shall be an eternal desolation.

AMOS – THE PROPHET OF JUSTICE

- Key Verses:* 5:24 - “But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.”
8:2 - “Then said Jehovah unto me, the end is come upon my people Israel; I will not again pass by them any more.”
- Key Word:* Punishment.
- Key Phrase:* “Thus saith Jehovah.”
- Key Thought:* God’s justice demands punishment upon Israel for their injustice.
- Key Characters:* Amos, the shepherd, commissioned by God to be a prophet to Northern Israel. Amaziah, the corrupt priest of the shrine of Bethel.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. *The Author:*

- A. It is “the words of Amos” the herdsman of Tekoa (1:1). Even among the liberal critics, few have questioned the authorship of Amos.
- B. About the author:
 - 1. All that is known of him is revealed in his book.
 - 2. He was a native of Tekoa, a small mountain village 12 miles south of Jerusalem, 22 miles from Bethel. It was a lonely, sparsely populated district overlooking the

wilderness of the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea, some 18 miles away.

3. His name means “burden-bearer.”
4. We must not confuse him with Amoz, the father of Isaiah.
5. The fact that his father’s name is not mentioned suggests that he was probably from a poor, obscure family.
6. His occupation:
 - a. He was a humble shepherd of an ugly type of sheep with fine wool, called “noked” (7:14).
 - b. He was also a dresser of sycamore trees, a poor quality of figs called mulberry figs.
 - 1) “Dresser” means pincher. The unripe fruit had to be punctured to promote ripening.
 - 2) The fruit was infested with insects and inedible until the top was punctured so the insects could escape.

C. His ministry:

1. He was neither a prophet nor a son of the prophets (7:14).
 - a. That is, he was not a professional prophet.
 - b. Nor had he been to a school for prophets (II Kings 2:3).
 - c. God had called him specially for his mission.

2. “Amos, a son of the wilderness . . . a man of granite make, stern, fearless, self-contained, of powerful, well-knit mind, vivid imagination, and lofty bearing.” G. G. Findlay.
3. He was deeply devoted to God and his law.
4. His preaching was blunt, courageous, and powerful.
 - a. He was a powerful preacher of repentance.
 - b. He has been called “the plumbline preacher” (7:7).
 - c. He is the John the Baptist of the Old Testament.
5. His writings are considered by many to be the oldest of the prophets to survive.
6. He was a first-rate orator, using the Hebrew without blemish.

II. *The Background of Amos' Work:*

A. Politically:

1. Assyria had long been casting a lustful eye at the rich lands of Israel.
2. Jeroboam II had ascended Israel's throne in 783 B. C. and ruled as a military despot.
3. Uzziah had become king of Judah in c. a. 786 B. C.
4. Both kingdoms enjoyed success and prosperity both politically and economically.

B. Socially:

1. With their prosperity came luxury and corruption in government and justice, both

domestically and morally.

2. The poor were crushed and abused by the greed of the wealthy.
- C. Religiously:
1. Religion had degenerated into a commercial racket. Jehovah had been reduced to the level of a pagan god in the public mind.
 2. The only impact their religion had on their daily life was bad. It corrupted them rather than strengthened them.
- D. His mission: Go to Bethel, the religious center of the north, and proclaim the doom of the nation.
1. Israel will be destroyed; nothing can avert it.
 2. Amos' predictions came true within 30 years.
 3. Bethel was a small town 10 miles north of Jerusalem. It was a chief national religious shrine where Jeroboam had placed a golden calf.
 4. It was especially sacred because Jacob had his dream about the ladder into heaven there.
 5. See I Kings 12:28-31.
- E. Amos prophesied between 760 and 759 B. C.
- F. His contemporaries were Hosea in the north and Isaiah and Micah in the south.
- G. The words of Amos can only be understood in light of his social, economic, and historical background.

III. *About the Book:*

- A. It bears the name of its author.
- B. Literary qualities:
 - 1. Most of Amos is cast in poetic form, a fact obscured in the KJV and the ASV, but clarified in the RSV.
 - 2. His style reflects high literary qualities. He is a master in the use of metaphors, sarcasm, irony, and parallelism.
 - 3. "He is the author of the purest and most classical Hebrew in the Old Testament." G. L. Robinson.
 - 4. The style of his writing is simple and terse.
 - 5. "As Burns among the poets, is Amos among the prophets." G. Gilfillam.
- C. Date:
 - 1. His book is thought by many to be the earliest of the writing prophets to come down to us.
 - 2. "Two years before the earthquake" (1:1) indicates that the book was not completed until at least two years following oral delivery of the message.
- D. Amos and Deuteronomy: It seems he had a special fondness for this book of Moses. He alludes to it repeatedly. See 2:10 (Deut. 29:5); 4:10 (Deut. 4:30; 30:2); 4:11 (Deut. 29:23); 5:11 (Deut. 28:30-39).
- E. Amos and the New Testament:
 - 1. Stephen quotes Amos 5:24-27 in Acts 7: 42-43.

2. James cites Amos 9:11 in Acts 15:16-18.
- F. Amos and Hosea contrasted:
 1. Amos thundered their doom without a sigh; Hosea told the same thing with a broken heart.
 2. Amos had little to say about Baal; to Hosea, such was a paramount sin.
- G. Purposes:
 1. To announce coming judgment upon Israel because of their idolatry and sin.
 2. To make plain to the people of Israel what the demands of God's service truly are.
 3. To remind Israel that God cares for all nations and exercises sovereignty over them.
 4. To show that all nations are expected to respect such basic rules of human conduct as integrity, honesty, purity, and fairness.
 5. To show that cruel, inhumane treatment of one's neighbor will negate all worship, no matter how elaborate.
 6. To remind Israel of Jehovah's faithfulness to his covenant and law and their accountability to a practical observance thereof.
- H. Amos and the liberal critics:
 1. As is usual, these skeptical scholars have presumed to label parts of Amos' message as from an unknown later source.
 2. Their conclusions are highly subjective and are built on a contrived base.
 3. For a good analysis and refutation, see

A Survey of Old Testament Introduction
by Gleason Archer, Jr.

- I. Miscellaneous facts about the book:
 1. “Never has the holy law of God been preached with greater earnestness and intensity than it was proclaimed by (this man), who spared, neither rich nor poor, neither young nor old, neither vociferous rebel nor unctuous hypocrite.” T. Laetsch.
 2. Amos charged the nation with four great sins: materialism, oppression of their neighbors, moral decadence, and religious hypocrisy.
 3. The great earthquake he mentions in (1:1) must have been unusually severe.
 - a. Zechariah refers to it some 200 years later (Zech. 14:5).
 - b. It is thought that a total eclipse may have accompanied it (Amos 8:9).
 - c. Astronomers calculate that it took place on June 15, 763 B. C.
 - d. Josephus dates the earthquake in 751 B. C.
 4. The “summer fruit” of 8:1 is the last fruit of the season, so the nation had used up its last chance to escape judgment.
 5. The “kine of Bashan” were fat, sleek cattle. Amos likens the women of Israel to those fat cows (4:1-3).
 6. The “houses of ivory” were houses lavishly decorated with inlaid ivory (3:15).

7. God asks in 5:25, "Did you bring unto me sacrifices in the wilderness forty years?" The question is elliptical. The real question is, "Did you *only* sacrifice for those forty years? Did you not have to obey as well?" (See I Sam. 15:22).
8. They were "not grieved for the affliction of Joseph" (6:6). The rich of Amos' day were as unconcerned about the welfare of the nation as were Joseph's brothers when he went into slavery.
9. The "plumbline" was used to determine whether walls were straight (7:7-9). Israel's spiritual walls were so out of plumb they would have to be destroyed.
10. The "tabernacle of David" means the house or dynasty of David (9:11). It was restored or rebuilt in the coming of the Messiah and the establishing of his church (Acts 15:16-18).
11. "Day of the Lord" means any day of divine judgment. The concept is first introduced by Amos (5:18).
12. Amos had no comforting words for those in adversity, only threats of vengeance and punishment for the sinful nation.
13. His threats were realized when Tiglath-pileser of Assyria came and took the northern portions of Israel in 735 B. C.
 - a. In 722 B. C. Samaria fell to Shalmaneser IV and Sargon II.

b. Taken into captivity were 27,290 Israelites.

J. What great men have said about Amos:

1. "Amos is the first of the great reformers."
2. "Amos towers in the distance like an earth-born Atlas . . ."
3. "Amos is one of the most wonderful appearances in the history of the human spirit." Cornhill.

IV. *A Simple Analysis of Amos.*

- A. Judgments upon nations (chapters 1-2).
- B. Judgments upon Israel (chapters 3-6).
- C. Israel's doom symbolized (7:1 - 9:10).
- D. A promise of restoration (9:11-15).

OUTLINE OF AMOS:

Introduction: (1:1)

I. *Declaration of Judgments Against Nations for Their Crimes (1:2 - 2:16).*

- A. Damascus (Syria), for merciless cruelty in war (1:3-5).
- B. Gaza (Philistines), for enslaving captives (1:6-8).
- C. Tyre (Phoenicia), for dealing in slave traffic (1:9-10).
- D. Edom, for cruel and heartless conduct toward their brethren.
- E. Ammon, for fiendish cruelty in war (1:13-15).
- F. Moab, for desecration of the dead (2:1-3).
- G. Judah, for rejecting the law of Jehovah (2:4-5).

- H. Israel, for corrupting themselves both morally and spiritually (2:6-16).
- II. *Three Proclamations From God (3:1 - 6:14).*
 - A. The necessity for judgment on Israel (3:1-15).
 - 1. Israel's unique position (3:1-2a).
 - 2. With privilege goes responsibility (3:2b-8).
 - 3. Israel's inescapable penalty (3:9-15).
 - B. Destruction is coming, so get ready (4:1-13).
 - 1. Rebuke to the greedy women (4:1-3).
 - 2. Vanity of false religion (4:4-5).
 - 3. Neglect of God's warnings (4:6-11).
 - 4. Prepare to face God's judgment (4:12-13).
 - C. Funeral dirge for a dead nation (5:1 - 6:14).
 - 1. Prophecy of destruction (5:1-3).
 - 2. A call to seek Jehovah (5:4-9).
 - 3. Their injustice to the poor (5:10-13).
 - 4. Religion and morality are inseparable (5:14-15).
 - 5. Their sin will bring mourning (5:16-17).
 - 6. The day of the Lord will not be what they expected (5:18-20).
 - 7. God hates vain religion (5:21-27).
 - 8. Woe for the sins of pride and self-indulgence (6:1-7).
 - 9. Suffering and captivity will come (6:8-14).
- III. *Five Visions of Judgment (7:1 - 9:10).*
 - A. The locusts; judgment restrained (7:1-3).
 - B. The fire (drought); judgment rescinded (7:4-6).
 - C. The plumbline; judgment announced (7:7-9).
 - D. Amos opposed by Amaziah, a corrupt false priest (7:10-17).

- E. Israel's end foreshadowed (8:1-14).
 - 1. The basket of summer fruit, the end of the harvest season, foretold the end of the nation (8:1-3).
 - 2. The money-hungry rebuked (8:4-6).
 - 3. God will remember every sin in judgment (8:7-10).
 - 4. A famine of God's Word will be upon them (8:11-14).
 - F. Jehovah stands by the altar and directs judgment (9:1-10), promising to save the righteous remnant (9:8b-9).
- IV. *Prophecy of Restoration (9:11-15).*
- A. God will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen (9:11-12).
 - B. Prosperity will return to the land (9:13).
 - C. God will bring back the captivity of his people, and they shall rebuild their cities (9:14).
 - D. He will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of it (9:15).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

- 1. National sin means national judgment.
- 2. Individuals will be judged before the throne of God, nations will be judged now!
- 3. Nations and men that have received special privileges must assume corresponding responsibilities.
- 4. God is gracious and patient in warning us of judgment.

5. We see purpose and meaning in natural disasters.
6. God will not keep warning forever.
7. God is sovereign over all nations of the earth, to prosper or destroy!
8. Social injustice is intolerable in God's sight.
9. Ease, luxury and idleness lead God's people into deep sin.
10. Selfish indulgence leaves us deaf to the cries of the poor and oppressed.
11. False pride in our self-sufficiency chokes out God's influence in our life.
12. The most elaborate worship, if insincere, is an insult to God.
13. God's spokesman must never be silenced by the worldly-minded in the church!
14. Foolish sinners worship the stars while rebelling against him who made them.
15. Worldly men, like Amaziah, cannot conceive of one serving God from any motive other than money (7:12).
16. A crooked wall always hates a straight plumbline.
17. Justice between men is one of the divine foundation blocks of society.

OBADIAH – THE SERVANT OF THE LORD

Key Verses: 15: “For the day of Jehovah is near upon all the nations: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee . . .”

21: “. . . and the kingdom shall be Jehovah’s.”

Key Thought: Proud Edom will be humbled.

Key Concept: The providence of an almighty God will bring justice upon a wicked, oppressive nation.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. *The Author:*

A. Obadiah, prophet of Jehovah (vs. 1).

B. Thirteen different Old Testament men wear this name.

1. The Jewish Talmud identified Obadiah with king Ahab’s servant (I Kings 18:3-5).
2. The scanty evidence is not sufficient for a conclusion.

C. About the author:

1. All that we know of him is that reflected in this small book.
2. His name means “servant of the Lord.”
3. Obadiah was a godly, patriotic citizen of the kingdom of Judah who recorded for history the righteous indignation of his

soul towards the Edomites.

4. He strongly believed in the providential rule of God over all nations and the divine justice that would reward sinful nations for their crimes.

II. *The Background of Edom and Israel's Feud:*

- A. It dated from the birth of Isaac's twin sons, Jacob and Esau (Gen. 25:21-26).
- B. The event that triggered the feud was Jacob's obtaining the birthright by deceit (Gen. 25:27-34; 27:1-45).
- C. God considered the Edomites and Israelites brethren.
 1. Edomites were not to be abhorred (Deut. 23:7).
 2. Israel was forbidden to take his land (Deut. 2:1-8).
 3. Edomites could enter the congregation of Israel after three generations (Deut. 23:7-8).
- D. The Edomites refused Israel right of passage over their King's Highway in Moses' day (Num. 20:14-21).
- E. Economics was a major cause of strife between the two nations. The border between them, the Arabah, was a major caravan route. Copper ore was found there in abundance.
- F. Edom's anger tore perpetually and he kept his wrath forever (Amos 1:11).

III. *Information About Edom:*

- A. They settled the high plains south and east of

the Dead Sea.

- B. Their land was some 100 x 20 miles in dimension. It was well watered, with peaks to 5,700 feet above sea level.
- C. The name Edom means “the red.” It likely refers to the red sandstone rocks of their territory.
- D. It is also called Seir, the name of the range of mountains extending north to south in their land.
- E. They had Petra (Sela), Teman and Bozrah for fortified cities.
- F. Petra was one of the wonders of the ancient world.
 - 1. Her cliffs were 700 feet high.
 - 2. She was entered by a mile long corridor that made her invulnerable.
 - 3. Her buildings were carved into the red sandstone cliffs. They remain today.
 - 4. Petra means “rock.”
 - 5. From this hidden fortress the Edomites preyed on caravans passing by.
- G. David conquered the Edomites (II Sam. 8:14). Solomon later exploited their land and wealth.
- H. The Edomites rebelled and gained their independence in the days of Ahaz.
- I. When the Babylonians attacked Judah in 586 B. C., Edom joined them.
- J. By the time of Malachi, Edom had been severely beaten (Mal. 1:2-5).
- K. The Nabatean Arabs occupied their land in 312 B. C.

- L. The Greeks gave their land the name, Idumea.
- M. The Idumean's were forced to convert to Judaism by John Hyrcanus in 120 B. C.
- N. Julius Caesar appointed Antipater, the Idumean, procurator of Judah in 47 B. C. Herod, the son of Antipater, became king of Judea in 37 B. C.
- O. Following the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., the Idumeans vanished from history. They had joined the rebellion against Rome and were defeated.
- P. The Edomites reflected the attributes of Esau, a carnal, sensual people who loved their bellies, spoil, and revenge. They had no noble ideals or aspirations.
- Q. The religion of the Edomites is never mentioned in the Bible. This reflects their irreligious nature.

IV. *About the Book:*

- A. It wears the name of its author.
- B. It was addressed to the Hebrews of Israel who were suffering at the hands of the Assyrian aggressors.
- C. Occasion:
 - 1. Jerusalem had been plundered and the Edomites had aided in the looting (Obadiah 11).
 - 2. They expressed a fiendish delight in the evil which their brethren were suffering (Obadiah 12).
 - 3. In addition to looting the conquered land, they occupied some of its territory

(Obadiah 13).

4. As the defeated Israelites fled, the Edomites blocked their escape and sold them into slavery (Obadiah 14).
5. Four different invasions of Jerusalem took place over a period of years:
 - a. Shishank the Egyptian took the city during Rehoboam's reign in 926 B. C. (I Kings 14:25-26; II Chron. 12:1-12).
 - b. The Philistines and Arabians ravaged the city at the time of Jehoram's reign: 848-841 (II Chron. 21:16-17).
 - c. Jehoash of northern Israel defeated Amaziah of Judah in 790 (II Kings 14:8-14; II Chron. 25:17-24).
 - d. Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon destroyed the city and temple in Zedekiah's day; 586 B. C. (Jer. 52:12-17).
6. Scholars have been equally divided between the 845 date and the 586 date.
7. The early date in Jehoram's reign is to be preferred.
 - a. Edom had recently revolted (II Kings 8:20-22; II Chron. 21:8-20).
 - b. Obadiah does not mention the wholesale deportation of the population as happened in 586 B. C.
 - c. Slaves are not said to go east to Babylon, but to Phoenicia and the west (Obadiah 20).
 - d. When the other prophets discuss

Nebuchadnezzar's taking the city, they name the enemy and even the king himself. The aggressor is not mentioned by Obadiah.

- e. He does not say the city and temple were totally destroyed as did Nebuchadnezzar.
- f. Later prophets were acquainted with Obadiah's work and made use of it. It must therefore have preceded theirs.
 - 1) Amos (760 B. C.). Compare Amos 1:6 and Obadiah 6, 14; Amos 9:2 and Obadiah 4; Amos 7:12 and Obadiah 19.
 - 2) Jeremiah (627 B. C.). Compare Jer. 49:7-16 and Obadiah 1-9.
- D. This would place the date about 845 B. C.
- E. Purpose: not to warn the Edomites, but to announce their doom and thus comfort Israel.
- F. Obadiah and the liberal critics:
 - 1. Unbelieving enemies have maligned Obadiah as a "sordid example of petty Jewish nationalism and hatred." G. A. Smith.
 - 2. From the days of Eichhorn, such skeptics have questioned the unity of the book and sought to identify various sections by different authors. All of these seek to evade the predictive message which only the Holy Spirit can provide.
 - 3. For a thorough refutation, see Hobart

Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets*, Moody Press.

- G. Miscellaneous facts and information about Obadiah:
1. It is the shortest book in the Old Testament, only 21 verses.
 2. It is not quoted or echoed in the New Testament.
 3. Its single subject is Edom's sin and her coming doom.
 4. He has no denunciation for Israel, no call for righteousness.
 5. Edom typifies all heathen nations hostile to God's kingdom. The judgment upon Edom is symbolic of God's judgment on all evil nations (see vss. 15-16).
 6. The restoration of Israel to her land is predictive and typical of the future establishment of the Messianic kingdom (vs. 21).
 7. "The day of the Lord" is a day in history when judgments will come upon a nation, after which history will continue.
 8. The day would come when captive Hebrews would possess Zarephath (Phoenicia) and captives in Sepharad (in Asia Minor among the Greeks) would possess the south of Judah (vs. 20).
- H. Background reading on Edom: Amos 1:11-12; Isa. 34:5-15; 63:1-6; Jer. 49:7-22; Lam. 4: 21-22; Ezek. 25:12-14; 35:1-15; Joel 3:19; Mal. 1:2-5.

OUTLINE OF OBADIAH:

- I. *Edom's Fall Predicted (1-9):*
 - A. The Lord calls the nations to punish Edom (vs. 1).
 - B. Her false pride is the root of her sin (vss. 2-3).
 - C. God himself will destroy Edom (vs. 4).
 - D. Figures describing the total destruction coming upon Edom (vss. 5-9).
- II. *Reasons for Edom's Punishment (vss. 10-14):*
 - A. For violence done to their kinsman, Jacob.
 - 1. They refused to aid Israel in their distress (vs. 11).
 - 2. They pillaged the ruined city (vs. 13).
 - 3. They rejoiced over Jacob's disaster (vs. 12). (see Prov. 17:5).
 - 4. They blocked the escape of refugees (vs. 14a).
 - 5. They captured and sold survivors as slaves (vs. 14b).
- III. *The Day of the Lord Will Vindicate Zion and Bring Edom Down (vss. 15-21).*
 - A. Edom will reap as she has sown (vss. 15-16).
 - B. A remnant shall be saved in Israel (vs. 17).
 - C. The house of Jacob will one day consume and destroy Edom (vs. 18). John Hyrcanus did this in 120 B. C.
 - D. The remnant of Israel will one day occupy the lands of other enemies as well (vss. 19-20).
 - E. As in David's day, the kingdom shall be Jehovah's (vs. 21).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. Human defenses are useless when God moves against a nation.
2. God demands brotherly love and compassion.
3. Ridicule reveals a lack of brotherly love.
4. It is criminal to rejoice in the calamity and misfortune of another, even if he is an enemy.
5. His message is a rebuke to those who prefer not to become involved in the problems of others.
6. “Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov. 16:18).
7. God will reveal his righteous purpose in due time.
8. Eternal justice will prevail.
9. Profane people cannot hope to find favor at the hand of God whom they have never loved.
10. The kingdom shall be Jehovah’s – God will one day claim his own!
11. As Edom had treacherously dealt with her brother, Judah, so would her allies treat her (vs. 7).
12. Obadiah’s prophecy was fulfilled, “For violence done to thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off forever” (vs. 10).

JONAH – THE RELUCTANT MISSIONARY

Key Verses: 4:10-11, “Thou hast had regard for the gourd . . . should not I have regard for Nineveh, that great city . . . ?”

Key Words: God “prepared,” “Jehovah sent,” used 5 times.

Key Concept: “. . . Go . . . preach . . . the preaching that I bid thee.” (3:2).

Key Person: Jonah, the disobedient prophet of God.

Key Thought: God’s love and mercy extends to all men, be they Jew or Gentile.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. The Author:

A. The author is not named.

1. The book is written from the view of a third person. This is not an uncommon literary style in biography.
2. Ancient Jewish tradition ascribed the book to Jonah, himself, as do most conservative scholars today.

B. About Jonah:

1. His father was Amittai (1:1).
2. Jewish legend says he was the son of the widow of Zarephath, whom Elijah restored to life.
3. His home was Gath-hepher in the district

- of Zebulon in northern Israel (II Kings 14:25).
4. He prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II of northern Israel who began to rule in 782 B. C.
 5. Jonah succeeded Elisha as prophet in the northern kingdom.
 6. His contemporaries were Amos and Hosea in the north and Isaiah and Micah in the south.
 7. His name means “dove.”
 8. Jonah was fiercely patriotic. He would rather die than be found lending comfort to the nation’s enemy. In this he reflects the worst degree of narrow Jewish exclusivism toward Gentiles.
 9. He was a stubborn, strong-willed man who would not yield voluntarily, even to God.
 10. Jonah was a powerful and successful preacher of repentance.
 11. Unique facts about Jonah:
 - a. He is the only minor prophet whose career was devoted to a foreign people on foreign soil.
 - b. He is the only minor prophet whose career involved the miraculous in a large way.
 - c. He is the only Old Testament person said to have traveled on the Mediterranean Sea.
 - d. He is the only Old Testament

character which the Lord Jesus likened himself unto (Matt. 12:38-41).

- e. Jonah is the only preacher in history who hoped he would fail.

II. *About Nineveh:*

A. The capital of the kingdom of Assyria.

1. The most powerful nation of Jonah's world.
2. Assyria was an expansionist nation, willing to use aggression against her weaker neighbors, including Israel.
3. Following the death of Jeroboam II, King Menahem and Israel became tributaries to King Pul of Assyria (II Kings 15:19).

B. The Assyrians were unusually cruel in dealing with their enemies. King Ashur-nasir-pal II used terror to enforce submission.

"His usual procedure after the capture of a hostile city was to burn it, and then to mutilate all the grown male prisoners by cutting off their hands and ears and putting out their eyes; after which they were piled up in a great heap to perish in torture from sun, flies, their wounds and suffocation; the children, both boys and girls, were all burned alive at the stake; and the chief was carried off to Assyria to be flayed (skinned) alive for the king's delectation." Hall's *Ancient History of the Near East*, p. 445.

C. The city:

1. Her population is estimated to have been 600 - 650,000.
 2. The administrative district of Nineveh is thought to have been 30 - 60 miles in diameter.
 3. She had five walls and three moats surrounding her. Her chief wall was 100 feet high and broad enough for four chariots to race abreast on the top.
 4. A great temple in her midst was in the form of a pyramid.
 5. Her library was said to contain some 10,000 plates in 860 B. C.
 6. The king of Nineveh from 810-783 B. C. was Adad-Nirari III.
 7. Nineveh was some 500 miles east of Jonah's home.
 8. Nineveh was threatened by the Urartu nation in Jonah's day.
 9. She was situated on the Tigris River 250 miles north of Babylon.
- D. Nineveh fell to the Babylonians, Medians and Scythians in 612 B. C. The prophet Nahum vividly predicted her fall.
- E. Alexander the Great vainly searched for the ruins of Nineveh, not realizing that the hills he occupied covered the great city.
- F. Her ruins have been thoroughly worked by archaeologists in modern times.
- G. Jonah's work has left no surviving mark in Assyrian records.

III. *About the Book:*

- A. It was most likely written by Jonah following his experience.
 - 1. The date would thus be between 780-750 B. C.
 - 2. Liberal scholars would date the book 430-400 B. C.
- B. Purposes:
 - 1. The book declares God's great love for all men — Gentiles as well as Hebrews — and his desire that all be blest.
 - 2. It illustrates the universality of the Divine purpose regarding "the nations" while rebuking the intolerance of the Israelites.
 - 3. From Jesus we learn that Jonah typified the coming Messiah who like the prophet would spend three days and nights in the tomb because of the sins of the nations (Matt. 12:40-41).
- C. What great men have said about Jonah: Charles Reade, eminent literary authority, said, "Jonah is the most beautiful story ever written in so small a compass."
- D. The Jews read Jonah in their synagogues on the Day of Atonement.
- E. Jonah and the New Testament:
 - 1. Jonah has no Messianic predictions.
 - 2. The prophet's experience with the fish was typical of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection (Matt. 12:40).
 - 3. The repentance of the Ninevites is set forth

- as a condemnation of those who do not repent at the call of Christ (Matt. 12:41).
4. The proud Pharisees overlooked this prophet from Galilee (John 7:52).
- F. Five approaches to interpreting Jonah:
1. *Fiction*. Some modernist's view it as simply a religious novel.
 2. *Parable*. Some see it as an unhistorical story to illustrate a spiritual lesson.
 3. *Symbolic*. Some see each point symbolizing some unspecified thing which the interpreter is free to postulate.
 4. *Mythical*. Some liberals treat Jonah as we would the myths of the Greeks and Romans.
 5. *Historical*. We view Jonah as a factual, historical record. Jesus put his stamp of approval on this approach (Matt. 12:40-41).
- G. Interesting facts about the book:
1. It alone of the Minor Prophets is written in narrative form.
 2. It contains no prophetic lessons.
 3. His famous sermon that brought the entire population of the world's mightiest nation to her knees is recorded in eight words.
 4. The book could be styled a spiritual biography of the prophet rather than a history of his life or ministry.
 5. Jonah is the test book of the Bible. It is a challenge to our faith. Our response to

Jonah reveals our attitude toward God. Whether or not one can believe the record of Jonah with its miracles depends on whether he spells the name of his God with a capital or small "g."

IV. *Jonah and the Liberal Scholars.*

- A. The historical truth and factuality of the book of Jonah was never questioned in Jewish Rabbinic tradition. Even Philo of Alexandria, the great allegorist, treated it as fact.
- B. "From Eichhorn onwards the denials of the book's historicity was in the first place the result of the dominant rationalistic view of the word, in which there was no room for miracle or for divine interference in things physical." H. L. Ellison.
- C. The testimony of Jesus establishes the historicity of Jonah (Matt. 12:40-41).
- D. For a good defense of Jonah, see *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* by Gleason Archer.

V. *The Supernatural Acts of God in Jonah:*

- A. People tend to think only of the miracle of the fish. But this is only one of several divine acts.
- B. All of the following were sent by God:
 - 1. The sudden storm that threatened the ship (1:4).
 - 2. The lot which fell on Jonah identifying him as the cause of their misery (1:7).
 - 3. The immediate stilling of the storm when Jonah was cast overboard (1:15).
 - 4. The great fish which swallowed Jonah

- (1:17).
- 5. His preservation in the fish (2:1ff).
- 6. The expelling of Jonah on the coast (2:10).
- 7. The vine that grew up overnight (4:6).
- 8. The worm that destroyed the vine (4:7).
- 9. The sultry east wind that tormented Jonah (4:8).
- C. The fish that swallowed Jonah:
 - 1. The Hebrew word is *dag*; the Greek is *ketos*. The word is defined, “a monster of undefined fish-species.”
 - 2. The English translators gave us the word “whale.”
 - 3. Skeptics ridicule this account as a “fish tale.”
 - 4. The great white shark of the Mediterranean grows to 70 feet in length and weighs up to 50,000 pounds. (*Rhinodon typicus*).
 - a. They have been documented to have a throat up to 12 feet wide.
 - b. They have been found with men, horses, sea-calves and reindeer in their stomachs, swallowed whole.
 - c. A white shark swallowed a man in the English Channel. Forty-eight hours later the shark was killed. The man was found unconscious but alive. Harry Rimmer interviewed him. (*Harmony of Science and Scripture*, p. 188-89).
 - d. A white shark was taken off Knight’s

Key, Florida in 1912. It weighed 30,000 pounds and was 45 feet long. It had a 1,500 pound black fish in its stomach. (Smithsonian Institute).

- e. James Bartly was swallowed by a large sperm whale in 1891 near the Falkland Islands. The whaling ship, *Star of the East*, captured the whale the next day. Bartly was found alive and he fully recovered. The story was carefully researched and verified by M. deParville, scientific editor of the *Journal des Debats*, Paris, France.
- f. Why should we doubt God's ability to prepare a sea monster capable of accommodating a man three days? Even men have made sea monsters able to host 125 or more men for 90 days beneath the seas and then deliver them alive on dry land: the submarine!

VI. *A Simple Summary of Jonah:*

- A. Running away from God (chapter 1).
- B. Running back to God (chapter 2).
- C. Running along with God (chapter 3).
- D. Running ahead of God (chapter 4).

OUTLINE OF JONAH:

I. *The Runaway Prophet (1:1-17).*

- A. God's command to go to Nineveh, 500 miles

east of Jonah's home (1:1-2).

- B. Jonah's flight to Tarshish, believed to be in Spain, some 2,000 miles to the west (1:3).
 - C. The great storm, sent by God because of Jonah (1:4-7).
 - D. The derelict prophet's confession (1:9-10).
 - E. The self-imposed sentence of death (1:11-15).
 - F. The conversion of the heathen seamen (1:16).
 - G. The great fish (1:17).
- II. *The Prophet's Prayer of Thanksgiving (2:1-10).*
- A. His prayer and vow from the fish's belly (2:1-9).
 - B. He is vomited out on dry land (2:10).
- III. *The Sermon That Saved A Nation (3:1-10).*
- A. The missionary command (3:1-3).
 - B. The message of warning delivered (3:4).
 - C. The amazing response of the Ninevites (3:5-6).
 - D. The proclamation of national repentance (3:7-9).
 - E. God's judgment is averted (3:10). Jeremiah 18:7-10 sets forth God's standard for judging nations.
- IV. *A Lesson on Grace For A Narrow, Bigoted Prophet (4:1-11).*
- A. Jonah's unbelievable response to Nineveh's repentance (4:1-5).
 - B. The episode of the vine and the worm which killed it (4:6-8).
 - C. The divine rebuke of the prophet (4:9-11).
 - 1. Here we see the amazing grace of God that loved even the wicked Ninevites and desired their salvation.

2. This is the primary lesson of the book.

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. It is impossible to escape the presence of Jehovah (Psa. 139:7-12).
2. It is tragic to face life's storms without God.
3. The path of self-will always leads to disaster.
4. There is no place so remote or desolate that it cannot be made a house of prayer by a praying saint.
5. Men have looked so hard and long at the great fish of Jonah that they have failed to see the God who made the fish.
6. We see the necessity of obedience to God's commands, no matter how distasteful.
7. God's threats are conditional.
8. This demonstrates the power of preaching to change men for good (I Cor. 1:21).
9. Genuine repentance will always avert a catastrophe (Luke 13:3).
10. God had sent numerous prophets to the Hebrews, yet they had not repented. He sent one prophet to the heathen Ninevites and they repented en masse.
11. Being narrow-minded and bigoted towards other nations has always been contrary to God's will.
12. No man can be a herald of God's

- righteousness who is not also a herald of his mercy.
13. Too many preachers are like Jonah in that they are afraid of God's grace.
 14. The common people of Nineveh repented first, then the nobility. That is still the normal course of religious change and revival.
 15. We see the evil and danger of a false, narrow patriotism and nationalism such as possessed by Jonah.
 16. As the worm ate the heart of the vine, so selfishness had eaten Jonah's heart.
 17. Jonah's experience impressed upon Israel the fact that God's salvation was not for them alone; they were to share it with all nations.
 18. The penitent sinner shall condemn the nominal professor of Christianity. "The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here" (Matt. 12:41).
 19. In his providence, God used Jonah to help prepare Nineveh to be the rod of his anger against Israel and Judah. It had to be a rod that would chasten but not destroy (Isa. 10:5-19).

MICAH — THE PROPHET OF THE POOR

Key Verses: 6:8 “. . . what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God.”

7:18 “Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth over the transgression of the remnant of his heritage.”

Key Thoughts: National sins demand national judgment. Elaborate ritual zealously observed can never replace social and moral righteousness.

In Messiah’s coming kingdom, Israel’s fortunes will change from discipline to blessing.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. The Author:

A. It is “the word of Jehovah that came to Micah the Morashtite” (1:1). He must not be confused with Micah the son of Imlah that Ahab hated (I Kings 22:8).

B. Micah’s authorship has been disputed by skeptics in recent generations.

1. They grudgingly grant him such portions as they are willing to accept by their subjective standards.

2. Along with believers of all ages, we accept Micah's authorship of the whole.
- C. About the author:
 1. His name:
 - a. A shortened form of Micaiah.
 - b. It means "who is like Jehovah."
 2. All we know about the prophet is recorded in this book.
 3. That his father's name is not mentioned would suggest that he was of humble parentage.
 4. His home was Moresheth-gath.
 - a. A rural farming village.
 - b. Located some 22 miles from Jerusalem in the Shephelah hills near the plain of Sharon.
 - c. It was close by the larger Philistine city of Gath.
 - d. The highway from Assyria to Egypt passed his village.
 - e. His home was in a fertile region covered with fields of crops, wild flowers, and olive trees.
 5. His ministry:
 - a. He prophesied "in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah" (1:1).
 - b. Date: He began his work prior to Samaria's fall (1:5), and continued into Hezekiah's reign (Jer. 26:18).
 - c. Micah was a man of the country,

preaching a message his fellow rural-folk understood.

- 1) He saw little good in the great cities of his day.
- 2) He championed the cause of the poor who were oppressed by the rich and powerful.
- d. Although he lived in the Southern Kingdom, he spoke to the sins of Samaria as well (1:6).
- e. He was a true patriot who loved his homeland enough to condemn it.
6. His preaching:
 - a. From his writing we see a man of fire and power, good judgment, and a tender heart.
 - b. He was daring and of strong conviction, ever faithful to his God.
 - c. He revealed his source of power, saying, "I am full of power by the Spirit of Jehovah, and of judgment and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression . . ." (3:8).
 - d. No prophet was so straight forward and blunt in condemning the social evils of his day.
 - e. "In none of the prophets does the fire of indignation against social wrong doing burn more fiercely." W. J. Moulton.
 - f. His message was religious and moral

rather than political.

- g. It is neither his family ties nor his place in society, but his message that makes him great.
 - h. He possessed Amos' passion for social justice and Hosea's heart of love.
7. His contemporaries:
- a. Isaiah and Micah preached in the south while Hosea worked in the north.
 - b. He is thought to have been younger than Isaiah.
 - c. While Isaiah the aristocrat served in the king's court, Micah, the peasant, preached in the country.
 - d. The last half of the eighth century B. C. is called the golden age of Hebrew prophecy.

II. *The Socio-Political Background of Micah's Work:*

- A. Assyria dominated the world political scene during the last half of the eighth century B. C.
- B. In 734 B. C., Syria and northern Israel conspired to overthrow Ahaz, King of Judah. Assyria captured Galilee and Gilead, deporting their citizens.
- C. In 722 B. C., Samaria, the last vestige of the nation of Israel, fell to Shalmaneser of Assyria.
- D. Judah was placed under tribute.
 - 1. The heavy tribute tax gave the greedy landlords an excuse to oppress the poor, even to confiscate their property and

possessions.

2. Even widows and orphans were evicted from their homes.
- E. Teachers of the law abused their positions, nobles fleeced the poor, judges accepted bribes, prophets and priests flattered the wealthy for their dole.
1. Lust for money prevailed in every place.
 2. Materialism had rooted out virtually every trace of morality and spirituality.
 3. Under Hezekiah, Jerusalem was a hot bed of intrigue and faction. Some urged alliance with Egypt while others argued for submission to Assyria.
- F. In 711, Ashdod, under King Yaman, led a revolt against Assyria. Judah, Moab and Edom joined in refusing to pay tribute, looking to Egypt for help. Sargon inflicted severe penalties on the offenders. Fortunately, Jerusalem was spared.
- G. In 701, Hezekiah of Judah was lured into a similar revolt. Sennacherib took all of Judah, including the fortress city of Lachish near Moresheth-gath.
- H. His siege of Jerusalem was broken only by a divine intervention. An angel of the Lord smote 185,000 Assyrians in one night, saving the city.
- I. The historical background can be studied in II Kings 15:29 - 19:37 and II Chron. 28-32.
- III. *About the Book:*
- A. It bears the name of its inspired author.

- B. Literary qualities:
 - 1. It is written in poetic style.
 - 2. He writes with “vividness and emphasis, lightning flashes of indignation at social wrongs, rapid transitions from threatening to mercy, vehement emotions and sympathetic tenderness . . .” George L. Robinson.
 - 3. He used an excellent style of Hebrew, yet simple as we would expect from a peasant of that day.
 - 4. He made extensive use of “puns,” playing on the sounds and meaning of words.
 - 5. His book is a summation of his many spoken sermons.
- C. Date: His book was written between 735 and 700 B. C.
- D. He spoke to the problems of both the northern and southern kingdoms.
- E. Micah and the Old Testament:
 - 1. He is quoted in Zeph. 3:19; Ezek. 22:27; and Isa. 41:15.
 - 2. He and Isaiah predict the Messianic kingdom in almost identical terms. Compare Micah 4:1-4 with Isa. 2:2-4.
 - 3. His message helped to save Jeremiah’s life when the leaders noted that Micah had predicted Jerusalem’s overthrow 100 years before (Jer. 26:1-19). This is the only time Micah’s name appears in the Old Testament, outside his book.

- F. Micah's Messianic Prophecies:
 - 1. 5:2, his birthplace.
 - 2. 2:12-13, his rule as king.
 - 3. 4:1-7, the nature and extent of his reign.
- G. Micah and the New Testament:
 - 1. His prediction of Messiah's birthplace (5:2) is cited in Matt. 2:5-6.
 - 2. Micah 7:6 is quoted by Jesus in Matt. 10:35-36.
- H. Purposes:
 - 1. To bring both nations to repentance and help them to thus avoid disaster.
 - 2. To set forth the reasons for God's complaint against the two nations and to announce their certain and sure punishment if impenitent.
 - 3. To demonstrate the holiness of Jehovah and the righteousness of his rule.
 - 4. To encourage the faithful among them to look for future deliverance and blessings.
 - 5. To announce the salvation yet to come when Messiah appears.
- I. His message:
 - 1. Micah's message was intended especially for the cities of Israel and Judah.
 - 2. True faith necessarily produces social equity, justice, and practical holiness based on God's righteous rule.
 - 3. God hates injustice and empty ritualism but he delights in pardoning.
- J. Micah and the liberal critics:

1. Typically, they deny Micah's authorship for a great part of the book.
 2. For a thorough refutation of their criticisms, consult *Old Testament Introduction*, by John Raven.
- K. Miscellaneous facts about the book:
1. For a modern reader who knows little of Palestine and the actual happenings of Micah's day, the book appears confused, difficult, and practically meaningless (Kyle Yates).
 2. He was the first prophet to predict Jerusalem's fall (3:12).
 3. He was the first to announce the birthplace of Messiah (5:2).
 4. Micah's great summary of true religion: "Do justly, love kindness, walk humbly with thy God" is engraved on the wall of the Library of Congress in Washington.
 5. Micah was a master in the use of paronomasia, playing on the sound or meaning of words. Chapter 1:10-16 is obscure in most translations. F. W. Farrar renders it as follows:
 "In Tell-town (Gath) tell it not;
 In Weep-town (Akko) weep not!
 In Dust-town (Beth-le-aphrah) roll thyself in dust.
 Pass by, thou inhabitress of Fair-town (Shaphir) in nakedness and shame!
 The citizens of March-town (Zaanen)

marched not forth.

The mourning of Neighbor-town (Bethel) taketh from you its standing place.

The inhabitress of Bitter-town (Maroth) is in travail about good. Because evil hath come down from Jehovah to the gate of Jerusalem. Bind the chariot to the swift horse, thou inhabitress of Horse-town (Lachish).

Therefore wilt thou give farewell presents to the Possession of Gath (Meresheth-Gath).

The houses of False-spring (Achzib) became a disappointing brook (Achzab) to Israel's kings.

Yet will I bring the heir (Sargon, King of Assyria) to thee, thou citizen of Heir-town (Mareshah)."

6. The moral problems Micah faced:
 - a. Exploitation and oppression of the poor (2:2, 8, 9; 3:1-4).
 - b. Unscrupulous use of power (3:10).
 - c. Lack of integrity (7:2-6).
 - d. Contempt for true religion (3:5-8).
 - e. Corruption in religious leaders (3:5-7, 11).
 - f. Greed and corruption in every level of leadership (7:3).

L. What great men have said about Micah:

1. Dean Stanley: "It contains one of the most sublime and impassioned declarations of spiritual religion the Old Testament contains."
2. Dr. A. Pierson said of 7:18-19, "A little poem of twelve lines in the Hebrew . . . one of the most exquisite things to be found in the entire Old Testament, and would alone be sufficient to prove that this Bible is the word of God, for there is nothing like it in all the literature of men."
3. John Paterson: "This book was not written with ink but with the lifeblood of the prophet."

IV. *A Simple Analysis of Micah:*

- A. Denunciation and Doom, Chapters 1-3.
- B. Glimpses of Coming Glory, Chapters 4-5.
- C. The Lord's Controversy With His People, Chapters 6-7.

OUTLINE OF MICAH:

Introduction: (1:1).

- I. *God's Judgment on Samaria and Jerusalem (1:2 - 2:13).*
 - A. God's summons to the people (1:2-4).
 - B. God's proclamation (1:5-7).
 - C. The prophet's message (1:8 - 2:5).
 1. His lamentation for Jerusalem (1:8-10).
 2. Woeful description of the judgment (1:

11-16).

3. Reasons for punishment (2:1-5).

D. Corruption of the prophets (2:6-11).

E. Deliverance of the remnant promised (2:12-13).

II. *Sins of the Nation's Leaders Denounced and Messiah Promised (3:1 - 5:15).*

A. Crimes of the rulers exposed (3:1-12).

1. Princes (3:1-4).

2. Prophets (3:5-8).

3. All rulers (3:9-12).

B. Messiah's kingdom, their hope (4:1-12).

1. In the latter days of Jerusalem (4:1-5).

2. The remnant will be gathered and Jehovah will reign in Zion (4:6-8).

3. Before glory must come Babylon and captivity (4:9 - 5:1).

C. The Deliverer and his deliverance (5:2-15).

1. He will come from Bethlehem (5:2-4).

2. Assyria will not prevail (5:5-6).

3. God's remnant will prevail and bless the nations (5:7-9).

4. The holy people will be made holy (5:10-15).

III. *God's Lawsuit With His People (6:1-16).*

A. Micah summons the defendants (6:1-2).

B. Jehovah the plaintiff; ingratitude their crime (6:3-5).

C. The peoples' sarcastic question (6:6-7).

D. The prophet's answer (6:8).

E. Indictment and penalty (6:9-16).

IV. *The Reconciliation of the Problem (7:1-20).*

- A. He confesses the nation's sins (7:1-6).
- B. He affirms his faith in God's providential love (7:7-13).
- C. He prays for redeeming grace (7:14-17).
- D. He praises God's mercy (7:18-20).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. Pretensions of piety and generous contributions cannot atone for a lack of true righteousness.
2. Religion and ethics are inseparable.
3. Unscrupulous use of power, even though within law's bounds, will not go unpunished.
4. Every act of cruelty toward our fellowman is an insult to God.
5. Religion that does not affect the heart and lead one to submit to God's will is worthless.
6. Preachers who know they are speaking as God's Holy Spirit hath taught can be bold and courageous.
7. Prophets and preachers who mold their message to please the elite are enemies of God and righteousness.
8. Unworthy leaders will lead a nation into the abyss of destruction.
9. The wisdom of God is seen in prophecy.
10. We see reasonableness in God's requirements that we "do justly, love kindness,

and walk humbly with our God.”

11. True peace will only come when people enter Messiah's kingdom and heed his teaching.
12. To love mercy is more than to show mercy, for a man may show mercy for many reasons and be selective where he shows it.
13. Jehovah is still searching for a righteous man (7:1-2).
14. God is merciful, bestowing favor on those who are penitent.

NAHUM – THE POETIC PROPHET

Key Verses: 1:7-8: “Jehovah is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble: and he knoweth them that take refuge in him. But with an over-running flood he will make a full end of her (Nineveh’s) place, and will pursue his enemies into darkness.”

Key Thought: God’s utter destruction of Nineveh.

Key Words: “He will make a full end.”

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. *The Author:*

- A. Nahum the Elkoshite (1:1).
- B. Until the end of last century neither the unity of the book nor Nahum’s authorship was ever questioned. Since that time most liberal scholars attempt to credit the first chapter to some unknown writer.
- C. About the author:
 - 1. We know only what is revealed in his book.
 - 2. His name means “consolation” or “comforter.”
 - 3. His home was Elkosh whose location is uncertain.
 - a. It has been identified with Elhush, a village two miles north of ancient Nineveh: also with a village in Galilee

which Jerome visited; and a village in southwest Judea near Lachish.

b. Capernaum literally means "village of Nahum."

4. He was a patriot who hated Assyria, the archenemy of his homeland.
5. His contemporaries were Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Huldah, and Josiah of Judah.
6. He is unique among the prophets in that he had no condemnation for Israel nor any call for repentance or reform for Nineveh.

D. His times:

1. His date is identified by chapter 3:8-10.
2. Thebes had already fallen. That occurred in 663 B. C.
3. Nineveh was yet to fall. That date was 612 B. C.
4. In that 50 year interval he wrote his message.
5. He wrote about 220 years after Jonah.

II. *The Socio-Political Background of Nahum's Message:*

- A. The international scene was dominated by Assyria and Egypt. The decisive battle of Thebes in 663 B. C. had made Assyria master of the civilized world.
- B. Assyria was founded by Nimrod, great grandson of Noah (Gen. 10:8-11).
- C. Its capital, Nineveh, was situated on the east side of the Tigris River, opposite the present city of Mosul in Iraq. Nineveh was capital of the empire from 1000-800 B.C. and from 705-612 B.C.

- D. The Assyrians worshipped the cruel Asshur as their principal god.
- E. They were primarily a nation of warriors who delighted in raping, ravishing, plundering and destroying.
- F. They have been described as one of the most sensual, ferocious, and diabolical races ever to inhabit the earth. For example, Ashurbanipal boasted of tearing lips and limbs off of captured rulers, of forcing other kings to pull his chariot, and of hanging the head of a slaughtered king about another king's neck. Theirs was truly a reign of terror.
- G. Nineveh, Assyria's capital, was thought to be impregnable.
 - 1. Her chief wall was 100 feet high, wide enough for 4 chariots to race abreast.
 - 2. She had 1200 defense towers.
 - 3. The moat outside her walls was 140 feet wide and 60 feet deep.
 - 4. For more information on Nineveh, see the outline of Jonah.
- H. The fall of Nineveh described by Nahum:
 - 1. The Medes, Babylonians, and Scythians united to attack the city under the Median king, Cyaxares.
 - 2. They first took all the surrounding cities and fortifications, then laid siege to Nineveh.
 - 3. The city's leaders proclaimed a 100-day fast to propitiate their gods.

4. The river supplying their moats overflowed and undermined the walls, causing them to collapse.
5. The king, Esar-hadden II, seeing his defenses broken, had himself and his family burnt alive in his palace to escape the wrath of his enemies.
6. The city fell in 612 B. C. as Nahum had predicted with remarkable detail.

III. *Assyrian Invasions of Palestine:*

- A. Tiglath-Pileser (745-727 B. C.) invaded northern Israel and deported some of her people.
- B. Shalmaneser IV (727-722 B. C.) laid siege to Samaria but died before her fall (II Kings 18: 9-12).
- C. Sargon II (722-705 B. C.) took Samaria, dismantled and deported the northern kingdom.
- D. Sennacherib (705-681 B. C.) took all of Judah and sieged Jerusalem. His army was destroyed at Jerusalem's gates (II Kings 18:13 - 19:37).
- E. Esar-haddon (681-625 B. C) invaded Egypt and captured Thebes. He was reigning when Nahum wrote.

IV. *About the Book:*

- A. Nahum writes in poetic style.
 1. "Poetically, the little book of Nahum is one of the finest in the Old Testament." J. C. McFadyen.
 2. Nahum is a master of the Hebrew style.
 3. No other prophet, save Isaiah, is Nahum's equal in boldness, ardor or sublimity.

4. His is “the most vivid and passionate fragment of declamation in all literature.” Brice.
 5. It consists of one single poem.
 6. Some conclude that Nahum’s poem was set to music for worship.
- B. Nahum has but one theme – the doom of Nineveh, which is to come shortly.
1. He writes from the standpoint of a citizen of Judah (1:4, 15; 2:1-2).
 2. Nahum’s book is a terrific arraignment against nations that seek glory by war and oppression.
 3. He has no word of condemnation for Judah nor call for repentance for Nineveh.
 4. He says nothing about Messiah or his coming kingdom.
 5. His message is designed to comfort the bruised and broken nation of Judah.
 - a. It is a cry of joy at the coming judgment upon the evil oppressor, Assyria.
 - b. It is the “fervent expression of the outraged conscience of mankind.” H. Hailey.
- C. Nahum and the New Testament:
1. Nahum is not quoted in the New Testament.
 2. The “beautiful feet” passage of Rom. 10: 15 is more likely from Isa. 52:7 than from Nahum 1:15.
- D. In the Septuagint, Nahum is placed after Jonah

since both relate to Nineveh.

- E. What great men have said about Nahum:
 - 1. "For sheer beauty, poetic imagery, dramatic description and vivid imagination, Nahum is unsurpassed . . ." K. Yates.
 - 2. "His language is strong and brilliant: His rythm rumbles and rolls, leaps and flashes like the horsemen and chariots he describes." G. A. Smith.
 - 3. "It is a classic in all. It is marked by clearness, by its finished elegance, as well as by fire, richness and originality." DeWette.
- F. Nahum and the liberal critics:
 - 1. Some liberal scholars claim that 1:2 - 2:3 are part of a later acrostic poem prefixed to Nahum's original work.
 - 2. For a good refutation of this subjective criticism, consult *Old Testament Introduction* by John H. Raven.
- G. Miscellaneous facts about the book:
 - 1. It is not possible to fully understand Nahum without some knowledge of Nineveh, the Assyrian nation, her evil ways, and her overthrow.
 - 2. The word "burden" means an oracle spoken against a person or nation.
 - 3. The lion was the national symbol of Assyria (compare 2:11-13).
 - 4. Nahum and Jonah compared:
 - a. Jonah proclaimed God's love (4:2); Nahum declared his holiness and

- justice (1:2, 6).
- b. The men of Nineveh had repented at Jonah's preaching, but they soon reverted to their old ways. Nahum now pronounces their doom.
5. Isaiah also predicted the destruction of the Assyrian kingdom (Isa. 10:24-27).
6. Four national sins deserving special condemnation:
 - a. Ruthless military power (2:11-13).
 - b. Unscrupulous commercial practices (3:16).
 - c. Slavery.
 - d. Witchcraft (3:4-5).
7. Assyria is "an object lesson to the empires of the modern world, teaching as an eternal principle of the divine government of the world, the absolute necessity for a nation's continued vitality, of that righteousness, personal, civic and national – which alone exalteth a nation." Kennedy.
8. Diodorus Seculus relates an ancient prophecy that Nineveh would never be taken until the river should be its enemy. He reports that during the siege, the river flooded and undermined the wall for some 2¼ miles (compare 2:6).
9. So completely was Nineveh destroyed that prior to her excavation, many skeptics questioned if she had ever existed. Lucian wrote "Nineveh is perished, and there is no

trace left where once it was.”

10. Two major aspects of God's nature are depicted by Nahum: his mercy (1:7, 15) and his judgment (1:2).
11. In Nahum we see the agony of a tormented world anxiously awaiting a deliverer.
12. Fragments of an ancient commentary on Nahum were found in Cave No. 1 at Qumran.
13. Ashurbanipal (669-626 B. C.) was the greatest patron of literature in pre-Christian times.

V. *A Simple Analysis of Nahum:*

- A. Nineveh's judgment decreed (1:1-15).
- B. Her judgment described (2:1-13).
- C. Her judgment defended (3:1-19).

OUTLINE OF NAHUM:

Introduction: (1:1).

I. *Nineveh's Destruction Declared (1:2-15).*

- A. The avenging Jehovah will not leave her crimes unpunished (1:2-6).
- B. To be faithful to his own people, Jehovah must destroy Nineveh (1:7-12).
- C. Deliverance promised to Judah, but judgment for Nineveh (1:13-15).

II. *The Judgment of Nineveh Described (2:1-13).*

- A. A vivid picture of the city's capture (2:1-9).
- B. The desolation of the defeated city (2:10-13).

- III. *A Vindication of God's Judgment on Nineveh (3:1-19).*
- A. The sins of Nineveh recounted (3:1-4).
 - B. She will be humiliated by Jehovah (3:5-7).
 - C. As No-Amon (Thebes) had fallen, so must Nineveh (3:8-13).
 - D. Resistance will be vain, the city will fall (3:14-19).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

- 1. There is a limit to the patience of God.
- 2. We see the universality of God's government in the world. He rules in the kingdoms of men (Dan. 4:17).
- 3. God will punish wicked nations and individuals according to their works (1:3).
- 4. God's wrath must be interpreted in terms of his love.
- 5. A nation built on pride, cruelty, force and selfishness cannot hope to have friends in the day of calamity.
- 6. All that God can do with a wicked, impenitent nation is to destroy it.
- 7. In the day of distress and anguish, men who do not know God must suffer untold sufferings.
- 8. Arrogance that leads to senseless destruction of life and property arouses the anger of God.
- 9. No mercy will be shown to them that show

- no mercy.
10. "The history of the world is the judgment of the world."
 11. There are no strongholds secure from the vengeance of God.
 12. They that take the sword shall perish with the sword (Matt. 26:52).
 13. Men and nations are saved to serve. When they cease to serve God and man, judgment comes.
 14. In Nahum we see the goodness and severity of God (Rom. 11:22).
 15. "Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceedingly small; though with patience he stands waiting, with exactness grinds he all." H. W. Longfellow, *Re-tribution*.

HABAKKUK – THE MAN WHO COMPLAINED TO GOD

- Key Verses:* 2:4 - “. . . the righteous shall live by his faith.”
2:20 - “But Jehovah is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.”
- Key Words:* Why? (1:3).
Faith, i.e., faithfulness (2:4).
Woe, used 5 times in 2:6-19.
Yet (3:18).
- Key Thought:* When the righteous are bewildered by the apparent triumph of the wicked at the expense of the saints, they must trust God’s rule and be faithful to him.
- Key Characters:* Habakkuk, the troubled prophet of God.
Jehovah, the patient ruler and judge of men and nations.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

- I. *The Author:*
- A. “Habakkuk the prophet” (1:1).
 - B. About the author:
 - 1. We know nothing of his parents, birthplace, or life.
 - 2. He was a prophet of Judah – one chosen of God to deliver his message to his people.
 - 3. Some have theorized that he might have been a Levite temple musician on the basis

of the scribal note at the end of 3:19.

4. Rabbinic tradition says he was the son of the Shunammite woman raised from the dead by Elisha (II Kings 4:17-37).
5. His name means "love's embrace" or "he that embraces."
6. Tradition says he fled to Egypt when the Babylonians took Jerusalem.
7. Eusebius reported that Habakkuk's grave was at Keilah, south of Jerusalem.

C. His ministry:

1. We date Habakkuk during the reigns of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim, 612-605 B. C.
2. His contemporaries were Jeremiah, Huldah and Zephaniah.
3. He does not seem to have been a public preacher like Jeremiah.
4. Usually a prophet delivered God's message to the people, but Habakkuk takes his and the people's complaint to God. He does not complain *about* God, but *to* God.
5. He wrestled with a profound theological problem. His book is the answer he found.
6. The problem he faced was twofold: Why his prayers were unanswered and God's use of the evil Babylonians for judgment of a people better than they.
 - a. This raised a question about the justice and righteousness of God.
 - b. How can the holy God use wicked instruments to accomplish his will?

- c. It is noteworthy that God did not provide a direct answer to his question.
- 7. “He was a philosopher, earnest and candid . . . sensitive, speculative; the suppliant among the prophets” (George Robinson).
- 8. As was Thomas among the apostles, so was Habakkuk among the prophets.
- 9. In him we see the conflict of a doubting mind with a believing heart.
- 10. His questions would only be asked by a person who believed in a righteous all-powerful God. Such would never bother the atheist.
- 11. He is among the first of many troubled believers who ask God, “why?” The writer John Dryden described the general situation thus: “Virtue in distress and vice in triumph makes atheists of mankind.”
- 12. He boldly challenges God to defend his actions.
- 13. “He represents pessimism or despair as it never was represented before, and on the other (hand) he rises to heights of faith which even David did not attain” (Joseph Parker).

II. *The Historical Background:*

- A. He had witnessed Josiah’s great reform movement in Judah and its fading effect.
- B. He heard with great sorrow of the death of King Josiah at Meggido at the hands of Pharoah Necho.

- C. He heard the report of the fall of mighty Nineveh in 612 B. C.
- D. For a short while, Pharoah Necho controlled all the lands west of the Euphrates.
- E. Babylon, formerly a tributary of Assyria, was rapidly rising to prominence under Nabopolassar.
 - 1. His son, Nebuchadnezzar, was a brilliant young general in his father's army.
 - 2. Nebuchadnezzar has been called the Napoleon of the East.
- F. The evil sons of Josiah — Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim — reigned in Judah.
- G. Social conditions in Judah were deplorable (1: 2-4):
 - 1. Lawlessness and tyranny were rife.
 - 2. Strife and contention was the norm.
 - 3. Righteous people were oppressed, especially the poor.
 - 4. Many lived in open, flagrant sin.
 - 5. Idolatry flourished.
- H. Compare II Kings 23:29-37 for more information.

III. *About the Book:*

- A. "He assuredly is one of the finest writers in the Old Testament. The beauty of his language and his chaste style entitle him to a place in the front rank of the prophetic school" (Ward).
- B. Habakkuk's style "is surpassed by none of the Hebrew prophets in dignity and sublimity" (J. Wolfendale).

- C. “His denunciations are terrible, his derision bitter, his consolation, cheering” (Ibid).
- D. Of the third chapter:
 - 1. George Robinson said, “It is bold in conception, sublime in thought, majestic in diction and pure in rhetoric.”
 - 2. G. C. Findley calls it “a splendid ode, a meditation on the grandeur of Jehovah, which deserves to be counted . . . amongst the masterpieces of Hebrew poetry.”
 - 3. Ewald: “A composition unrivaled for boldness of conception, sublimity of thought, and majesty of diction.”
- E. His approach is unique; for rather than address the people directly as God’s spokesman, he taught them by telling them of his doubts and questions and the answers he found.
- F. He wrote his vision down at the time and preserved it so that when the fulfillment came, folks could clearly perceive that it was according to the prophecy (2:2-3).
- G. His purpose was to keep alive the flame of hope and trust in God in the face of national disintegration.
- H. Other Hebrew writers wrestled with the problem of the suffering of the righteous and the prosperity of the wicked (see Job; Psalms 37; 49; 73; Jer. 12:1-4). Job was concerned with the suffering of individuals, Habakkuk with nations.
- I. Habakkuk reflects a familiarity with the writings of Amos, Hosea, Micah and Isaiah.

- J. Habakkuk and the New Testament: His great message that the just shall live by faith is used three times (Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38).
- K. He has no specific Messianic promises, although his great statement on faith found its full meaning in the Christian gospel.
- L. Habakkuk and the liberal critics: In their pride and human wisdom such scholars have dissected his book and sought evidence of multiple authorship and editing.
 - 1. Their conclusions are highly subjective and prejudicial.
 - 2. For a thorough examination and refutation of these views, consult Hobart Freeman's *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets*, Moody Press.
- M. Miscellaneous facts about the book:
 - 1. In the Septuagint, his name is Hambakoum.
 - 2. In Assyrian, the word hambakuku is the name of an unidentified garden plant.
 - 3. Cave No. 1 at Qumram yielded a commentary on Habakkuk chapters 1 and 2 from the first century B. C.
 - 4. Jews read Habakkuk 3 in their synagogues on Pentecost.
 - 5. The Apocryphal books of Bel and the Dragon contain legendary stories about Habakkuk.
 - 6. Some definitions:
 - a. *Burden*: a solemn message of doom or

- hardship delivered by an inspired man.
- b. *Theophany*: “a visible manifestation of deity.” In a vision the prophet saw God coming to administer justice (3: 3-15).
 - c. *Theodicy*: a “defense of God’s goodness and omnipotence in view of the existence of evil” (Webster).
 - d. *Faith*: to Habakkuk, faith meant much more than our common definition. It meant faithfulness, honesty, integrity, trustworthiness.
 - 1) Luther took his statement, “the just shall live by faith,” and made it the watchword of the Protestant Reformation.
 - 2) Luther gave a definition to faith unknown to either Paul or Habakkuk (compare Gal. 5:6).
 - e. “*The law is slacked*” (1:4). Literally this means chilled or paralyzed; not functioning.
7. “That he may run that readeth it” (2:2).
- a. Publish the vision in such a way that whoever reads it may do so easily.
 - b. Post the prophecy in a public place so that one running by may see it.
 - c. Or write it in such short simple terms that a herald can shout its words as he runs.
- N. What great men have said about Habakkuk:

1. "Here is the first inspired appeal against man's inhumanity to man, and the crimes committed in the name of empire" (G. C. Findley).
2. Daniel Webster wrote, "What finer conception for a masterpiece could any artist desire than the picture of the prophet Habakkuk sitting in the midst of utter ruin and desolation, singing in spite of everything, faith's joyous and triumphant song."
3. While on a diplomatic visit to France in 1782, Ben Franklin met a group of Bible-rejecting skeptics. He asked to share with them an ancient verse he had found. Having primed their curiosity, he read a copy of Habakkuk's third chapter. It was received with extravagant admiration. They asked who wrote it? Where did you find it? Imagine their chagrin when he told them it was from the Bible they so hated. Both of these anecdotes are from F. W. Boreham's *A Faggot of Torches*.

IV. *Simple Summaries of Habakkuk:*

- A. Look and see the problems of faith (chapter 1).
- B. Stand and see the solutions (chapter 2).
- C. Kneel and worship the God you see at work (chapter 3). Or:
- D. The dialog between Habakkuk and Jehovah (1: 1 - 2:3).
- E. Woes on the Chaldean oppressor (2:4-20).

- F. His anthem of praise (3:1-19).

OUTLINE OF HABAKKUK:

Introduction: (1:1).

- I. *The Prophet's Conversation With Jehovah (1:2 - 2:4).*
 - A. His passionate protest (1:2-4).
 - 1. Jehovah seemed unresponsive (1:2).
 - 2. Evil was rampant (1:3-4).
 - B. God's reply (1:5-11).
 - 1. "I am working a work in your days" (1:5).
 - 2. "I raise up the Chaldeans" (1:6-10).
 - 3. They will sweep through in punishment, then vanish like the wind (1:11a).
 - 4. His guilt will be punished (1:11b).
 - C. God's answer provokes yet another problem (1:12 - 2:1).
 - 1. How can the holy God use an evil nation to punish his erring children? (1:12-17).
 - 2. He resolves to wait for God's reply (2:1).
 - D. Jehovah's response (2:2-4).
 - 1. Record the vision and wait for its certain fulfillment (2:2-3).
 - 2. The Chaldeans will fall because of pride but the righteous will live because they are faithful (2:4).
- II. *Woe to the Oppressor Nation (2:5-20).*
 - A. Woe to him who plunders and robs other nations (2:5-8).
 - B. Woe to him who is greedy and covetous (2:9-11).

- C. Woe to him who builds his town with bloodshed and cruelty (2:12-14).
- D. Woe to him that makes his neighbors drink the cup of wrath and humiliates them (2:15-17).
- E. Woe to them that worship useless idols (2:18-20).

III. *His Anthem of Praise (3:1-19).*

- A. His prayer that God will revive his people (3:1-2).
- B. A majestic vision of God's future plan (3:3-15).
 - 1. God came up from the region of Sinai (3:3-5).
 - 2. He stood and beheld and drove the enemy nations asunder (3:5-11).
 - 3. He threshed the nations and saved Israel (3:12-15).
- C. The lesson he learned (3:16-19).
 - 1. He must wait in patience for Jehovah's moves (3:16).
 - 2. A new dimension of faith (3:17-19).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

- 1. A doubting mind needs a devoted heart.
- 2. God never scolds the sincere questioner.
- 3. Thank God for questions: they provoke us and drive us to search out the marvelous will of God. They inspire us and make us humble.
- 4. Remember that atheists have no problems such as Habakkuk's. Only those who

- believe in God worry about sin and justice.
5. A little knowledge of God will often cause us problems, but with fuller knowledge answers come.
 6. Since God's ways and thoughts are superior to ours, we should not expect to fully fathom everything God does or allows to be done (Isa. 55:8-9).
 7. A repeated message of the Old Testament is not the survival of the fittest, but the suffering of the best.
 8. Evil bears the seeds of its own destruction, whether in God's people or heathen nations.
 9. "Let the righteous, however baffled his faith be by experience, hold on in loyalty to God and duty, and he shall live" (G. A. Smith).
 10. Again we see God using the kingdoms of the world to accomplish his will, even without their knowledge and consent. He then punishes the evil they do.
 11. God has all the ages to demonstrate his divine justice. The years are the crucible of God to manifest the essential weakness of sinful people.
 12. "Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceedingly small:
Though with patience He stands waiting,
With exactness grinds He all" (H. W. Longfellow).

13. When Habakkuk only looked at his circumstances, he was bewildered and confused (1:3). When he waited for God and listened to his word, he rejoiced in song (3:18-19).
14. The real purpose of religion is not to have the doubts removed, but to help us be sure of God's control of our lives and our world.
15. When those perplexing problems come, and they will, we must mount our watch-tower of faith and catch faith's vision of God at work in his world.

ZEPHANIAH – THE PROPHET OF JUDGMENT DAY

- Key Verses:* 1:14, “The great day of Jehovah is near, it is near and hasteth greatly . . .”
3:13, “The remnant of Israel . . . shall feed and lie down and none shall make them afraid.”
- Key Words:* Jealousy (1:18; 3:8).
Remnant (2:7, 9; 3:13).
- Key Concepts:* “Day of the Lord,” used 7 times.
“Jehovah in the midst” for judgment (3:5) and for salvation (3:17).

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. *The Author:*

- A. It is the word which came unto Zephaniah the son of Cushi . . . (1:1).
- B. About the author:
 1. His name means, “he whom Jehovah has hidden or protected.”
 2. His father’s name, Cushi, literally means “Ethiopic.”
 - a. Based upon this, some have speculated that his father was an Ethiopian.
 - b. Such a conclusion is unwarranted.
 3. He was of the royal family:
 - a. He traces his genealogy back four generations to King Hezekiah (1:1).

- b. This is disputed by some.
 - c. Why else would he alone trace his pedigree that far?
 - d. This would make Zephaniah a distant cousin to King Josiah.
- 4. He was likely a resident of Jerusalem:
 - a. This is reflected in his exceptional knowledge of the city; i.e., the Fish Gate, the Second Quarter, the Maktesh (1:10-11).
 - b. "In the first few verses of Zephaniah we see almost as much of Jerusalem as in the whole book of either Isaiah or Jeremiah" (J. Hastings).
- 5. As a resident of Jerusalem and a member of the royal family he had adequate opportunity to observe the crimes of his people.
- 6. He reflects a thorough knowledge of the Law of Moses and the earlier prophets.
- 7. Zephaniah was burdened with the terrible conception that doom was about to come upon the wicked world in which he lived.
- 8. His austere nature has gained for him the label of "the puritan, or the protestant preacher."
- 9. Many sinners have called him fanatical.
- 10. He was a fiery preacher who spoke with fury and effectiveness. His burning message rebuked a people who were rapidly losing the power to respond to a serious challenge.

11. His dates:
 - a. "In the days of Josiah, son of Amon, king of Judah" (1:1).
 - b. Josiah reigned from 639-608 B. C.
- C. His ministry:
 1. His work was done in Judah before and during the reformation of Josiah.
 - a. Josiah's reform is thought to have begun in 621 B. C.
 - b. Since the evils Josiah abolished were still present, we date Zephaniah prior to 620 B. C.
 2. Zephaniah was contemporary with Jeremiah, Nahum, Huldah the prophetess and possibly Habakkuk.
 3. Josiah, Zephaniah and Jeremiah were all young men in their early twenties when the great reform began (see Jer. 1:6; II Kings 22:3).
 4. Zephaniah was most likely one of those prophets that aided Josiah (II Kings 23:2).
- D. His message:
 1. His one consuming thought was the coming day of Jehovah (1:7).
 2. He saw that judgment was God's method of purifying the remnant of Israel and the conversion of the nations.
 - a. Nahum, his contemporary, saw judgment coming upon Nineveh alone; Zephaniah saw it as universal, beginning with Jerusalem!

- b. No prophet made the day of Jehovah more vivid and fearful.
- 3. The idea of an imminent invasion of extraordinarily devastating nature underlies his description of the day of Jehovah. It is generally conceded that the invasion of the fierce Scythians about that time prompted his message.
- 4. He offers no hope of averting punishment, only that the remnant might be spared (2:3).
- 5. He foresaw a faithful remnant of battered survivors of that great judgment; a handful of meek, righteous souls, saved by the Lord (3:5-20).
- 6. He predicted a day when men of all nations would worship Jehovah (2:11).
- 7. He taught that eventually true worshippers would worship God wherever they dwelled, not just in Jerusalem (2:11; compare John 4:21).
- 8. He did not dwell on the social sins of Judah, rather their corruption of worship and idolatry (1:4-6).

II. *The Historical Background:*

- A. Zephaniah lived in a time of moral and spiritual decay. The world order was rapidly changing.
- B. The great Assyrian nation that had dominated the Middle East for 150 years was disintegrating. Assurbanipal was the last *great* king.
- C. Savage Scythian hordes were sweeping all across

the land.

1. The Scythians swept down out of southern Russia and plagued the Middle East for some 28 years.
 2. They made an assault upon Egypt, but were bought off by Pharaoh Psammitichus I.
 3. On their return north they plundered the temple of Aphrodite in Ashkelon.
 4. This fearsome experience may have provoked Zephaniah's message.
 5. The Scythians evidently by-passed Jerusalem. The prophet had urged repentance so the Hebrews might be "hid in the day of Jehovah's anger" (2:3).
- D. The powerful Babylonian kingdom under Nabopolassar was set to crush under foot the entire East.
- E. Josiah (only some 23 years old) ruled Judah following the deaths of Manasseh and Amon, two of the nation's worst kings.
- F. Under the reigns of Manasseh and Amon the nation was largely converted to heathenism.
1. The true worshippers of Jehovah and faithful prophets were persecuted and driven out.
 2. Princes and judges were so corrupt that justice was impossible.
 3. Injustice, oppression and violence were the order of the day in Jerusalem.
 4. The entire life of the royal court was at

- odds with the kind of preaching God's prophet would do.
5. People had been stimulated by so many false things that they were calloused and hardened.
 6. Zephaniah depicts his people as unteachable, the rulers as predators, the courts as merciless, the prophets as traitors and the priests profane. It was a dark time for his nation.
- G. For a scriptural background of this period see II Chron. 33:1 - 35:27 and II Kings 21:1 - 23:30.
- H. Josiah's reformation:
1. He came to the throne in 639 B. C. when only 8 years old. His regent was the godly high priest, Hilkiah.
 2. In his 16th year, he began to seek the Lord (II Chron. 34:1-3).
 3. When 20, he moved to suppress idolatry and unlawful worship (II Chron. 34:3-7).
 4. At 26 he launched a renovation of the temple of Jehovah which had fallen into disrepair (II Chron. 34:8-13).
 5. The book of God's law was found by the temple workers (II Chron. 34:14-28).
 6. Upon hearing the solemn warnings of God's word, the young king was deeply moved. It is likely that Deut. 28-30 was the part that so affected him.
 7. He called the nation's leaders together and

read the book to them (II Chron. 34:29-33).

8. They covenanted to restore God's ways and walk in them.
9. A further purge of idolatry was commenced as the king sought to stamp it out nationwide.
10. A great passover was observed by the nation such as had not been seen in past generations (II Kings 23:1-25).
11. In his 39th year, Pharoah Necho of Egypt passed through Palestine to attack the declining Assyrians.
 - a. Josiah and his troops sought to block the Egyptian advance.
 - b. Josiah was mortally wounded by an arrow (II Kings 23:29-30).
12. At his untimely death his reform movement faltered and the nation reverted to their old, wicked ways.
13. Within 34 years the noble attempt at reform was swept away by Babylon.

III. *About the Book:*

- A. It bears the author's name.
 1. Our English Zephaniah derives from the Hebrew.
 2. The Greek and Latin Bibles call it Sophenias.
- B. It was addressed to the people of Judah to warn them of an impending day of judgment from the Lord.

- C. His purpose was to awaken the Hebrews from their lethargy and complacency and turn them back to God's ways.
 - 1. It offered consolation and hope to the faithful remnant.
 - 2. It struck fear in the hearts of the wicked.
- D. Literary characteristics of the book:
 - 1. His style is a solemn dirge-like poetry.
 - 2. It is written in a very forceful manner.
 - 3. His use of the language is fresh, lively and pure.
 - 4. His tone is stern and rugged.
 - 5. He leans heavily on the words and concepts of his predecessors, especially Isaiah and Amos, which are reflected in his book.
- E. Zephaniah and the liberal critics:
 - 1. As we have come to expect, these self-appointed critics challenge the integrity of God's word, Zephaniah being no exception.
 - 2. While virtually every critic has a different view, in general they challenge the authenticity of part of chapter 1 and most, if not all, of 2 and 3.
 - 3. For a good review and refutation, see *The Books of Nahum and Zephaniah* by T. Miles Bennett in the "Shield Bible Study Series."
- F. What great men have said about Zephaniah:
 - 1. Geo. A. Smith: "No hotter book lies in all the Old Testament. Neither dew nor

grass nor tree nor any blossom lives in it, but everywhere fire, smoke and darkness, drifting chaff, ruins, nettles, saltpits and owls and ravens looking from the windows of desolate palaces.”

2. James Hastings: “The fiercest of all the prophets.”
3. A. B. Davidson: “The book provides us a valuable insight into the religious, social conditions in Israel prior to the exile.” “It is valuable for its comprehensive view of history. The history of the nations is but another name for the operations of Jehovah among them . . .”
4. “Zephaniah is the classical pronouncement of divine judgment in the Old Testament.”

G. Zephaniah and the New Testament:

1. No quotes from his book are found in the New Testament.
2. There are uses of his term “day of wrath,” 1:15, 18, in Rom. 2:5 and Rev. 6:17.
3. His metaphor of pouring out a “bowl of wrath” is reflected in Rev. 16:1.

H. Some interesting miscellaneous facts:

1. His message inspired Thomas of Celano, a medieval monk, to write his famous hymn of judgment “Dies Irae, Dies Illa.” It has been called the greatest Latin hymn.
2. From Zephaniah 1:12, artists of the Middle Ages depicted him as a man with a lamp

searching the city for sinners.

3. The Hebrew text of Zephaniah has been quite well preserved (R. H. Harrison).
4. Zephaniah has no prediction of a personal Messiah, although 2:11 and 3:9 seem to speak of Messiah's age.

I. Some words and concepts defined:

1. *Syncretism* was a fundamental religious error of his day. It is the practice of blending two or more religions in one's life and worship. They swear by Malcom and Jehovah (1:5).
2. *Chemarim* (1:4) means "black-robed" and refers to the idolatrous priests appointed by the kings to conduct worship (II Kings 23:5).
3. *Cherethites* (2:5), the word means "cutters off" and is used metaphorically to describe the Philistines. Notice the parallelisms of 2:4-5.
4. "*Day of Jehovah*" (1:14). This is a day in history in which a nation would receive its just penalties. It is sometimes used of the last and final judgment day. The context must determine which.
5. "*Inhabitants of Maktesh*" (1:11). The footnote gives us "The mortar" which literally means a hollow in a rock. His use is metaphorical for a valley where certain crafts or shops were located.
6. "*The people of Canaan*" (1:11). Literally,

this means merchant people. To call a Jew a Canaanite was an insult, which he likely intended because of their heathen life style.

7. *“Settled on their lees”* (1:12). “New wine was left upon its lees only long enough to fix its color and body. If not then drawn off, it grew thick . . . To settle upon one’s lees became a proverb for sloth, indifference, and the muddy mind . . .” (G. A. Smith).
8. *“Those that leap over the threshold”* (1:9). A pagan custom imported from the pagan worshippers of the Philistine god, Dagon (see I Sam. 5:1-5).

IV. *Simple Summaries of Zephaniah:*

- A. Judgment upon Judah (1:1-18).
- B. Judgment upon all nations (2:1 - 3:8).
- C. Deliverance for the faithful remnant (3:9-20) or:
- D. The Lord in the midst for judgment (1:1 - 3:8).
- E. The Lord in the midst for salvation (3:9-20).

OUTLINE OF ZEPHANIAH:

Introduction: (1:1).

I. *Sins of Judah (1:2-18).*

- A. A declaration of retribution (1:2-9).
 1. Those who shall be punished (1:2-9):
 - a. Idolators, the remnant of Baal and the Chemarim, i. e., Baal priests (1:4).
 - b. Worshippers of the hosts of heaven

- (1:5a).
- c. Compromisers, who swear by Jehovah and Malcam, i. e., Molech (1:5b).
- d. Backsliders, "them that are turned back from following Jehovah" (1:6a).
- e. Alien sinners, "those that have not sought nor inquired after Jehovah" (1:6b).
- f. Corrupt princes and king's sons (1:7-8).
- g. Those who leap over the threshold and fill their master's houses with violence and deceit (1:9).
- B. The cry of anguish will rise, but it will be too late (1:10-18).
 - 1. "I will search Jerusalem with lamps." None of the wicked will escape (1:12).
 - 2. "I will punish the men that are settled on their lees," i. e., congealed in their sinful ways (1:12).
 - 3. The great day of God is near at hand (1:14-18).
- II. *Woe to Jerusalem and the Nations (2:1 - 3:5):*
 - A. Repent and seek forgiveness and mercy while ye may (2:1-3).
 - B. The sinful nations of the Gentiles . . . shall suffer wrath with Israel (2:4-15).
 - 1. Philistines (2:4-7).
 - a. Gaza (strong) shall be forsaken.
 - b. Ashkelon (the busy market place) shall be a desolation!

- c. Ashdod (mighty) will be driven out in the noon day, i. e., easily.
 - d. Ekron (deep rooting) shall be uprooted.
 - e. Cherethites (Philistines), the word of the Lord is against you.
- 2. Moab and Ammon shall become as Sodom and Gomorrah (2:8-11).
- 3. Ethiopia shall be slain by Jehovah's sword (2:12).
- 4. Assyria shall be destroyed . . . Nineveh, a desolation (2:13-15).
- C. Sinful Judah will be punished (3:1-5).
 - 1. Her sins:
 - a. Rebellious and polluted (3:1).
 - b. Obeyed not the voice of God . . . received not correction (3:2).
 - c. Trusted not in Jehovah (3:2b).
 - 2. The people who should have been examples of integrity to the masses failed (3:3-7).
 - a. Her *princes* are *roaring lions*, boldly devouring all (3:3).
 - b. *Judges* are *evening wolves* ravaging all for their present gain, leaving nothing for the morrow (3:3b).
 - c. *Prophets* are *wanton* and *faithless* (3:4).
 - d. *Priests*, *profane* the *sacred*, they *do violence to the law* (3:4b).
 - 3. The Lord in her midst sees and knows her sin. He constantly shows mercy and justice

- to her (3:5a).
- 4. Yet, they know no shame! (3:5b).
- 5. God expresses his disappointment (3:6-7).
- III. *A Promise of Redemption (3:8-20):*
 - A. God had no choice but to chastise them (3:8).
 - B. The judgment was not to exterminate but to purify (3:9-13):
 - 1. I will change their speech to a pure speech (3:9a).
 - 2. That *all* may call on the name of the Lord (3:9b).
 - 3. And serve him with one accord (3:9c).
 - 4. Those from beyond Ethiopia will bring offerings (3:10).
 - 5. The remnant shall not be ashamed (3:11-12).
 - 6. They shall be humble and lowly (3:12-13).
 - 7. They shall find refuge and safety in the Lord.
 - C. A promise of hope for the righteous remnant (3:14-20).
 - 1. Sing and be happy (3:14-17).
 - 2. God their shepherd will bring back their captivity (3:18-20).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

- 1. There are two sides to the personality of God, mercy and goodness and strict justice and terrible judgment against those who rebel against him (Rom. 11:22).

2. A man's belief about God largely determines his conduct (Prov. 23:7).
3. It is universally true that one tends to become like the God he worships!
4. The wrath of God is a terrible thing when turned against the sinful people.
5. Earnest warning is sorely, daily needed to draw us back to the paths of God (Amos 4:12).
6. The day of Jehovah is inevitable for all men of every race and station.
7. God's eternal plan has been the salvation of every nation on earth.
8. Those who scoff and fight against God's people shall suffer the wrath of God.
9. The great causes of God and humanity are not defeated by frontal attacks by Satan, but by the crushing indifference of the masses.
10. God's ministers should put strong emphasis upon the spiritual nature of God's kingdom.
11. God gives assurance that the humble ones who seek him will be safe in his presence in the day of doom (2:3).
12. The promise that joy will displace mourning and that tranquility will follow the storm, should bring encouragement to the righteous.
13. The wicked cannot hide or escape the day of Jehovah (Psa. 139:7-12).

14. Riches, wealth or honor will not save one in that day.
15. God's purpose is not to wreak vengeance and destroy, but to cleanse and refine and save those who will allow him to save them (II Pet. 3:9).
16. You should flee to the place of refuge now before the great and terrible day of Jehovah comes.

HAGGAI – THE TEMPLE BUILDER

Key Verses: 1:8 - “Go . . . and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith Jehovah.”

2:9 - “The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith Jehovah.”

Key Word: “Consider” (1:5, 7; 2:15, 18).

Key Phrases: “Saith Jehovah” or similar terms are used 26 times in his 38 verses.

“I am with you, saith Jehovah” (1:13; 2:4).

Key Concept: God must be first in our lives.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. The Author:

A. “Haggai the prophet.”

1. The word prophet means a spokesman for God.
2. Compare Exodus 7:1 and 4:15-16.

B. About the author:

1. All we know about Haggai is revealed in his little book and brief notices in Ezra 5:1 and 6:14.
2. His name means “festive” or “festival.” It is comparable to the Latin “Festus.” He may have been born on a festival day.
3. He had been exiled with his fellow Hebrews

in Babylon.

4. He was among the faithful remnant that returned in 536 B. C.
5. It is thought by some that Haggai was an old man who had seen Solomon's temple before it was destroyed (see 2:3).
6. Someone has called him "a steam engine in trousers."

C. Haggai as a preacher:

1. He was the first prophet of the restoration period following Babylonian captivity.
2. He was not a polished speaker; rather he was plain-spoken, blunt, and of few words.
3. "Haggai's greatness lies in this: he saw the duty next at hand and inspired his people to undertake it."
4. He was strong in faith and optimistic in hope.
5. He was an exhorter. Haggai was one of those rare persons who could motivate people to do great things in the face of incredible hardships.
6. He had his priorities straight: God's work must come first (Matt. 6:33).
7. He saw the duty at hand and set himself to see it done.
8. He had a "remarkable genius for organization and a capacity for getting things done."
9. He had the vision to look beyond the rubble of the ruined city and see the hope

of tomorrow's finished work.

10. The one obsession of his life was to get God's temple built.
 11. He effaced himself and exalted God.
 12. He spoke with a "thus saith the Lord." He was truly God's messenger.
 13. He not only rebuked, he also cheered, commended and encouraged.
 14. He not only preached, he put his hand to the task as well (Ezra 5:1-2).
- D. His contemporaries: Zechariah, the prophet; Zerubbabel, the governor; Joshua, the high priest.

II. *The Historical Background of Haggai's Work:*

- A. A brief chronology of the Persian kings who ruled over the Hebrews:
1. Cyrus the Great became master of the world upon the fall of Babylon in 538 B. C.
 2. At Cyrus' death in 529, his son Cambyes, took the throne. Cambyes was cruel and desolute.
 3. In 522 Cambyes died (some think by suicide) and Darius, son of Hystaspes, became king.
 - a. He was challenged by a usurper known in history as Pseudo-Smerdis who held the throne in Persia for seven months before being killed.
 - b. In 521, insurrections broke out all over the empire. Twenty-three provinces rebelled.

- c. Darius fought 19 battles to secure his kingdom.
- B. A chronology of Haggai's ministry:
 - 1. 536 B. C. Cyrus issued his proclamation allowing the return of all captive peoples (Ezra 1:1-4).
 - a. Some 42,360 Hebrews set out for Judah (Ezra 2:1, 64).
 - b. In the seventh month (Oct.), God's altar was built and sacrifices offered. The Feast of Tabernacles was observed (Ezra 3:1-4).
 - 2. 535 B. C. In the second month, the foundation of the temple was laid (Ezra 3:8-10).
 - 3. 535-520 The work on the temple was forced to a halt by opposition of the Samaritans (Ezra 4:1-24).
 - 4. 520 B. C. Haggai and Zechariah stir the people to resume work on the temple:
 - a. Sept. Haggai's first prophecy (1:1-11).
 - b. Oct. His second message (2:1-9).
 - c. Nov. Zechariah's first prophecy (1:1-6).
 - d. Dec. Haggai's third and fourth oracles (2:10-23).
 - e. Jan. 521 B. C. Zechariah's second message (1:7 - 6:15).

- f. Nov. His third prophecy (7:1 - 8:23).
 - g. Mar. 515 B. C. The temple was completed (Ezra 6:15).
- C. Leadership in Judah:
 - 1. Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, was governor (1:1).
 - a. He was a direct descendent from David and Jechoniah, the last king of Judah before the captivity (Matt. 1:11-12).
 - b. He is thought to be the Sheshbazzar of Ezra 1:8-10 (compare Ezra 2:1-2).
 - 2. Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, was high priest (1:1).
 - a. He was descended from the last high priest, Seraiah.
 - b. He is sometimes referred to as Jeshua (3:2).
 - c. At the time Haggai began his work, Joshua and the priesthood were ceremonially defiled and disqualified for service (Zech. 3:1-10).
- D. The situation in Judah:
 - 1. The temple of God yet lay in ruins: only the altar had been erected (1:4).
 - 2. The people, being blocked in their efforts to rebuild God's house, had busied themselves in building their own and had comfortable "ceiled houses," i. e., paneled with wood (1:4).

3. Over the 16 years they had lost their concern for God's house:
 - a. During the 70 years of exile in Babylon, they had adjusted to worshipping without the temple.
 - b. A new generation had been born that had never seen the old temple, thus did not realize the extent of their loss.
 - c. Disillusionment over their ruined cities, hostile neighbors, and general hardships had discouraged them.
 - d. Crop failures and serious economic problems plagued them.
 - e. There was a personal interest in building their own homes and getting their business enterprises going.
 - f. There may have been the feeling that the realities of the restoration had not measured up to the glowing predictions painted by Isaiah in 35:1-10 and 40:1-11 of his prophecy.
 - g. Some may have argued that God wanted the temple to be ruined 70 years (compare Jer. 29:10-11).
4. The majority of the Hebrews had chosen to stay in Babylon.
 - a. Only 42,360 plus 7,337 servants came back in the first migration (Ezra 2: 64-65).
 - b. Those who stayed did help financially

(Ezra 1:5-6).

5. Economically, their little land would have qualified as a disaster area (1:6, 10-11).
 6. Haggai faced lack of concern, despondency, unbelief, apathy and moral insensibility.
- E. For a scripture background of Haggai's times, see Ezra 1:1 - 6:1.

III. *About the Book:*

- A. It bears the name of its inspired author.
 1. In the Greek Septuagint it is called "Aggaïos."
 2. In the Latin Vulgate, "Aggaeus."
- B. Literary style of Haggai:
 1. His style is "pathetic in exhortation, vehement in reproofs, elevated in contemplating the glorious future" (J. Wolfendale).
 2. His words are plain, concise, earnest, impressive; just what was needed for the occasion.
 3. He often used the interrogation (compare 1:4, 9; 2:3, 12).
 4. One is impressed by the absence of denunciation of idolatry, immorality and social injustice.
 5. His book likely is composed of excerpts from his notable lessons delivered at the time.
- C. Date: the book consists of four oracles dated between the last week of August and the last of December, 520 B. C. (1:1; 2:10). Few books

are as precisely dated.

- D. To whom written: the remnant of Jews living in Jerusalem following their return from Babylonian captivity.
- E. Purpose:
 - 1. His purpose was one: get the temple rebuilt.
 - 2. He has no call to repentance, no denunciation of social injustice or sin, no strong ethical or spiritual lessons, just one concern: build God's temple.
 - 3. To accomplish his goal he rebukes (1:1-10); encourages (2:1-9); and exhorts (2:10-19).
- F. The Hebrew text of Haggai is well-preserved.
- G. Haggai and the liberal scholars:
 - 1. Oesterly and Robinson are typical of the sinful arrogance of such men. They write, "he can have no place among the prophets in the real sense of the word."
 - 2. For a refutation of these assaults, see *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* by Hobart Freeman.
- H. Haggai and the New Testament: Hebrews 12: 26-28 contains a clear allusion to Haggai 2: 6-7: "I will shake all nations."
- I. Some miscellaneous facts about Haggai's book:
 - 1. His is one of the smallest books of the Old Testament, with only 38 verses.
 - 2. Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi are generally classified as the postexilic prophets

since they served after the Babylonian captivity.

3. According to the Talmud, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi were all members of the Great Synagogue, later known as the Sanhedrin.
4. It is noteworthy that 70 years passed from the first Babylonian invasion of Jerusalem (606 B. C.) to the first return in 536 and also 70 years from the destruction of the temple in 586 to its completion in 515 B. C.
5. On the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar:
 - a. According to II Kings 25:9 it was burned, not demolished.
 - b. This would explain why so few could do the work in only four years.
6. Houses ceiled with cedar (1:4). In Judea, stone was cheap, wood a luxury. If they could line the interior of their houses with wood, they were not as poor as they pretended.
7. Their rebuilt temple was as nothing compared to Solomon's (2:3).
 - a. Their lack of wealth and workers made it impossible to restore the temple to its former grandeur.
 - b. The ark of the covenant with its contents was lost and there is no evidence that the shekinah filled their temple.

8. The shaking of all nations (2:7) had reference to the providential upheaval and uprooting of the governments of the Gentile nations (see 2:21-22).
9. "The desire of the nations" (2:7) is traditionally interpreted to be Messianic, following the rabbis and Jerome. But the Hebrew word is plural and likely refers to the treasures of the Gentiles. Compare the ASV: "the precious things of all nations." Gifts for construction came from Darius (Ezra 6:5-13), Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:12-26), and other Gentiles (II Macc. 3:3).
10. "The latter glory of this house" (2:9). This temple was not materially more glorious than Solomon's, but Messiah would one day visit this temple and glorify it with his presence.
11. "If one bear holy flesh . . . If one that is unclean . . ." (2:12-13). The righteousness of the priest was not communicable, but uncleanness was. The whole nation was unclean and, therefore, disqualified to stand before God (see Lev. 21:1, 11; Num. 19:22).
12. "I will take thee, O Zerubbabel . . . and will make thee a signet . . ." (2:23). The chosen Davidic line was restored in Zerubbabel and would stand secure until Messiah came (compare Jer. 22:24 and Matt. 1:12).
13. Haggai was standing on the promises of

God. Ten times God repeated his promises:

- a. “I will take pleasure in it” (1:8).
- b. “I will be glorified” (1:8).
- c. “I am with you” (1:13).
- d. “I will bless you” (2:19).

14. Jewish rabbis attributed some of the Psalms to Haggai, as did the early church fathers.

- a. In the Vulgate, Psa. 111.
- b. In the Septuagint, Psa. 137, 146-148.
- c. In the Peshitta, Psa. 145.

15. Haggai’s success in seeing the temple rebuilt won him a place among the founders of postexilic Judaism.

J. Impressions Haggai has made on scholars:

1. “A prophet’s historical magnitude is measured, not by the literary splendor of his style, but by the work that he accomplishes” (Elmslie).
2. “. . . no other prophet . . . is more direct in his purpose, so pungent in his criticism, and yet so adept at reaching the object aimed at . . .” (Ward).

IV. *A Simple Summary of Haggai:*

- A. Divine reproof (1:1-15).
- B. Divine remedy (2:1-9).
- C. Divine explanation (2:10-19).
- D. Divine encouragement (2:20-23).

OUTLINE OF HAGGAI:

Introduction: (1:1).

- I. *A Rebuke and a Call to Action (1:2-15):*
 - A. Their excuse for not building God's house (1:2).
 - B. God's rebuke (1:3-4).
 - C. The call to consider their ways (1:5-6).
 - D. The charge to build God's house (1:7-8).
 - E. An explanation of their hardships (1:9-11).
 - F. They obeyed and began the work (1:12-15).
 - a. All the people assisted (1:12).
 - b. Haggai exhorted them with God's blessings (1:13-15).
- II. *Encouragement in the Face of Disappointment (2:1-9):*
 - A. Their temple was inferior to Solomon's (2:1-3).
 - B. They are encouraged to work, for God is with them (2:4-5).
 - C. God will bring them adequate provisions to adorn his house (2:6-8).
 - D. The latter glory shall exceed the former, saith the Lord (2:9).
- III. *An Appeal to Conscience and a Call to Patience (2:10-19):*
 - A. The whole nation was defiled by their sin (2:10-14).
 - B. Their sin had brought them penalties (2:15-19a).
 - C. From this day God would bless them (2:19b).
- IV. *David's Dynasty Will Be Restored (2:20-23):*
 - A. Nations of the world will fall (2:20, 22).
 - B. Zerubbabel will be established and protected as God's chosen leader (2:23).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. Today's church needs men like Haggai to help her get God's work done.
2. We need exhorters. Anyone can fuss, but it is a gift from God to be an exhorter (Rom. 12:6-8).
3. In Haggai and Zechariah we see the realist and the idealist working together to accomplish God's will.
4. We see the danger of lapsing into self-contentment and allowing God's work to slack.
5. Rather than be discouraged, we should be stimulated by scenes of decadence in God's people.
6. Haggai knew the importance of dealing with the urgent needs of the present hour (Eccl. 3:1).
7. Those who expect great things from God must attempt great things for him.
8. Haggai taught his brethren to seek first God's kingdom (Matt. 6:33).
9. The only hindrance to receiving God's blessings is ourselves.
10. It is a fatal mistake to leave God out of his work.
11. We see the awful contagion of sin. A healthy man cannot give his health to others, but a sick man can give his disease. So it is with sin.
12. A stern rebuke and call to duty is good medicine for God's people.

13. We see the value of self-examination: "Consider your ways" (II Cor. 13:5). "An unexamined life is unworthy of men" (Plato).
14. A small number, even though poor, can do great things for God if the dedication and determination are there.
15. Some Jews in Babylon sent their money, but the folks who saved Judaism from death gave their all.

ZECHARIAH – THE MESSIANIC PROPHET

- Key Verses:* 1:3 - “Return unto me, saith Jehovah of hosts, and I will return unto you.”
8:3 - “Thus saith Jehovah: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.”
13:1 - “In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.”
- Key Phrase:* “Jehovah of hosts.” It is used 52 times; 18 times in chapter 8.
- Key Thought:* If the nation will dedicate themselves to serving God, he will return to them with manifold blessings (see 1:3).

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. *The Author:*

- A. “The word of Jehovah unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo” (1:1).
- B. While all scholars freely grant Zechariah’s authorship of the first 8 chapters, liberal critics boldly deny that he wrote chapters 9-14. With those who love and respect the inspired Word of God, we accept the book as a unit from Zechariah.
- C. About the author:

1. His name means “he whom Jehovah remembers.”
 - a. It may refer to God’s mercy in restoring Israel to their home land.
 - b. His name is thus the theme of his message.
 - c. Twenty-seven men in the Old Testament share his name.
2. His family:
 - a. His father was Berechiah, the son of Iddo (1:1).
 - b. His grandfather, Iddo, was a Levitical priest who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel (Neh. 12:1, 4, 7). Iddo was head of a priestly family.
 - c. At a later date, Zechariah appears to have succeeded his grandfather as head of that priestly group (Neh. 12:1-16).
 - d. Thus Zechariah was a priest of the tribe of Levi.
3. He was born in Babylon and returned to Jerusalem with the first exiles under Zerubbabel.
4. His home was most likely Jerusalem where his work was done.
5. As a prophet, priest, and head of his father’s house, he would have enjoyed great influence.
6. Zechariah is called a young man in 3:4; the Hebrew word *naar* means boy, lad or youth.

7. His personality:
 - a. His writings reflect an engaging personality: a simple, hearty, practical man.
 - b. His spirit was dedicated to love, justice, and man's need for freedom and a happy home.
 - c. Three characteristics stand out: his sanity, his moral emphasis, his warm sympathy.
- D. His ministry:
 1. His immediate mission was to inspire his fellow Hebrews to complete the rebuilding of the temple.
 2. To restore his nation's recognition of God's government over them.
 3. To rekindle their faith and hope in view of the desolation of their surroundings.
 4. To reorganize the true worship of God.
 5. To purge the last vestiges of idolatry from the land.
 6. His work supplemented that of Haggai who began slightly before him.
 7. He inspired the discouraged Hebrews by prophesying in glowing terms of the glory to come in future ages.
 8. He foresaw and told of the coming Messiah and the establishment of his kingdom.
 - a. He and Isaiah excell all other prophets in Messianic prediction.
 - b. To Zechariah goes credit for keeping

the Messianic hope alive in those dreary days.

9. He called for righteousness in home life, government and worship. Rather than condemn or criticize the people, he exhorted them to higher planes.

II. *The Socio-Political Background of Zechariah's Work:*

- A. The first section was given in the eighth month of the second year of Darius Hystaspes called "The Great." We would reckon this as November 520 B. C.
- B. In 536 B. C. 42,360 Jews plus their servants had returned from exile in Babylon, led by Zerubabel the governor and Joshua the high priest.
 1. Work on the temple had started but stopped in the face of local opposition.
 2. Sixteen years had now passed.
 3. The Hebrews were so disheartened that they were content to let it lay uncompleted.
 4. No priests were yet worthy to officiate in sacrifice.
 5. Upon the accession of Darius Hystaspes to Persia's throne, Haggai and Zechariah challenged their people to recommence work on God's temple.
- C. When Darius took the throne, he was confronted with uprisings all across his empire. Nineteen major battles were fought.
- D. Times were hard in Judea. Crop failures, a serious depression and apparent ruin faced the

nation. In this they learned from experience what they refused to learn from the prophets.

- E. Under the leadership of these two great prophets the temple was completed early in 515 B. C.
- F. His contemporaries were Haggai the prophet, Joshua the high priest, and Zerubbabel the governor of Judah.

III. *About the Book:*

- A. It is named after its inspired author.
- B. Literary qualities:
 - 1. He was a gifted poet; much of his book is in poetic style.
 - 2. “Zechariah’s prophecy was not so much an emotional message as it was a literary product and as such comparable to a sacred drama of the middle ages” (Cadman).
 - 3. Of the twelve, only Zechariah majors in visions. These are related in chapters 1-6.
 - a. His visions are symbolical rather than historical like Daniel’s. This is important to remember.
 - b. His style is both apocalyptic and eschatological.
 - 4. The last section of his book is similar to Isaiah in content and style.
- C. Date:
 - 1. The first section of his book is dated 520 B. C., the second year of Darius (1:1).
 - 2. The second message came in 521 (1:7).
 - 3. The third, later that same year (7:1).
 - 4. The last portion, chapters 9-14, is generally

thought to be from a much later period of his ministry.

- D. To whom was it written? It was initially written for that body of Hebrews returned to Palestine after the Babylonian captivity. Of course, its larger message is universal in its scope.
- E. Purposes:
 - 1. His primary concern was to see the temple of God completed.
 - 2. To show the nation that they would be successful in their attempt at restoration.
 - 3. To reaffirm God's love for Israel.
 - 4. To demonstrate that moral failure was the cause of their fathers' rejection, and obedience the condition of their return to favor.
 - 5. To prepare them for the coming Messiah and his kingdom.
- F. Zechariah and the New Testament:
 - 1. He paints a vivid series of descriptions of Messiah which are noted in the section of the Messianic predictions of Zechariah.
 - 2. Many of his symbols are used by John in the Revelation:
 - a. Four horsemen (6:1-8; Rev. 6:1-8).
 - b. The olive trees and candlesticks (4:2-10; Rev. 11:4).
- G. Messianic details of Zechariah:
 - 1. Christ the Branch (3:8).
 - 2. Christ the Servant (3:8).
 - 3. Christ will build the temple or church of God (6:12).

4. He will reign upon his throne as a priest-king (6:13).
 5. His entry into Jerusalem upon the foal of an ass (9:9).
 6. Christ the good shepherd (9:16; 11:11).
 7. The smitten shepherd (13:7).
 8. The hands of Christ to be pierced (12:10).
 9. Christ the offering for sin (12:10; 13:1).
 10. Christ wounded in the house of his friends (13:6).
 11. Christ coming to judge Jerusalem (14:3-8).
 12. The worldwide Messianic reign (14:9-21).
- H. Zechariah and Haggai contrasted:
1. The first words of Haggai were words of rebuke; Zechariah's were words of comfort and encouragement.
 2. Haggai's task was chiefly to rouse the people to build the temple; Zechariah sought to lead the people to a completed spiritual reform.
 3. Haggai's message centers around the local situation in Judah in 520-516 B. C.; Zechariah's message is universal in scope.
- I. Zechariah and the liberal critics:
1. Since 1632 scholars have noted the difference in style and content between chapters 1-8 and 9-14.
 2. Liberals attribute this to different authors.
 3. Their conclusions being subjective, they are hopelessly at odds with themselves.
 4. We accept the unity and integrity of

Zechariah.

5. For a thorough analysis and refutation of these false views, see: *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* by H. E. Freeman, or *Old Testament Introduction* by John Raven.
- J. Some miscellaneous facts about Zechariah:
 1. He was well acquainted with the writings of the inspired men before him and used their words in his book more than any other.
 2. He presents the most complete portrait of the coming Messiah of any Hebrew writer.
 3. Zechariah is the largest book of the minor prophets.
 4. Zechariah is mentioned three times outside his book (Ezra 5:1; 6:14; Neh. 12:16).
 5. It seems to be his aim to condense in his own words, almost all that had been said by the earlier prophets about Messiah and his coming.
 6. Angels play an important role in his book as bearers of God's revelation (1:14).
 7. He is the only *prophet* who speaks of Satan (3:2).
 8. The ancient rabbis said he was a member of the Great Synagogue, later known as the Sanhedrin.
 9. Zechariah is to the Old Testament what Revelation is to the New Testament.

10. “Jehovah of hosts” is a favorite expression of his (1:3). It presents Jehovah as leader of the armies of heaven.
11. Verses 1-6 of chapter 1 exhibit “one of the strongest and most intensely spiritual calls to repentance to be found anywhere in the Old Testament.”
12. “All the earth sitteth still and is at rest” (1:11). This describes the political situation at the beginning of the reign of Darius Hystaspes.
13. Zechariah 2:12 is the only place in Scripture where Palestine is called “the holy land.”
14. Satan’s accusing Joshua the high priest reminds us of his accusations against Job (compare 3:1 with Job 1:7ff and 2:1ff).
15. Joshua standing before the Lord with filthy garments symbolized that no priests were qualified for temple service at that time (3:3).
16. For more information on the angel of Jehovah, see Appendix A.
17. The problem of Matt. 27:9-10: Matthew obviously quotes from Zechariah but attributes it to Jeremiah. Theo Latsch suggests “Matthew combines two prophecies, one from Zechariah (11:12-14) and the other from Jeremiah (32:6-8), ascribing them both to the latter prophet.”
18. Matt. 23:35 mentions a Zechariah the son

of Barachiah who was martyred in the temple. Rather than the Zechariah under consideration, it appears to be the man mentioned in II Chron. 24:20 who is called the son of Jehoiada."

- a. There is no historical indication that the minor prophet, Zechariah, was martyred.
- b. Some have suggested that Jehoiada also bore the name Barachiah.
- c. Some have suggested that we have an early interpolation by some scribe in Matthew's account since the expression "son of Barachiah" is not mentioned by Luke (11:51).

K. What scholars have said about Zechariah:

1. Zechariah is "the quintessence of Old Testament prophecy" (Martin Luther).
2. "He had the soul of an artist, the eye of a seer" (Ward).
3. He was "a man of unusual, almost unparalleled vision" (G. L. Robinson).
4. "At the time, no more fitting instrument could be found to rouse the people whose hearts had grown cold, than one who united the authority of the prophet, the zeal and the traditions of the sacerdotal (priestly) family" (J. S. Perowne).

IV. *A Simple Summary of Zechariah:*

- A. Visions of restoration (chapters 1-6).
- B. Oracles of appeal (chapters 7-8).

C. Disclosures of destiny (chapters 9-14).

OUTLINE OF ZECHARIAH:

- I. *Messages of Encouragement and Consolation to Complete God's Temple (1:1 - 8:23).*
 - A. God's call to repentance (1:1-6).
 - B. Eight visions and their meanings (1:7 - 6:8).
 - 1. The four angelic horsemen who watch over God's earth (1:7-17).
 - 2. The four horns and smiths (1:18-21).
 - a. The horns represent Israel's oppressors; likely Assyria, Babylon, Egypt and Persia.
 - b. The smiths are God's appointed agents to break the power of those nations and rebuild his nation.
 - 3. The man with the measuring line (2:1-13).
 - a. Jerusalem shall dwell safely as a city without walls (2:1-5).
 - b. Jehovah will dwell in the midst of her (2:6-13).
 - 4. The trial and acquittal of Joshua the high priest (3:1-10).
 - a. The high priest clad in filthy garments was unfit to officiate in worship (3:1-3).
 - b. God will cleanse and reinstate the priesthood (3:4-10).
 - 5. The golden candlestick and the two olive trees (4:1-14).

- a. God would remove every obstacle so that the temple could be completed (4:1-10).
 - b. The olive trees symbolize God's anointed servants; likely Joshua and Zerubbabel (4:11-14).
- 6. The flying scroll proclaimed God's judgment upon all sinners in the land (5:1-4).
- 7. The woman in the basket (5:5-11).
 - a. Sin is personified as a woman in a basket (5:5-7).
 - b. Sin must be put out of God's land and taken to her own place, Babylon (5:8-11).
- 8. The four chariots: Through his providential agents, God will punish the wicked and preserve his people (6:1-8).
- C. The coronation of Joshua (6:9-15).
 - 1. Joshua symbolized Messiah (6:9-12).
 - 2. Messiah would combine the offices of priest and king and build God's spiritual temple, the church (6:13-15).
- D. Questions about fasting (7:1-14):
 - 1. The Bethel delegation asks about fasting (7:1-3).
 - 2. The divine answer (7:4-11).
 - a. Human ordinances remain human and therefore vain.
 - b. Rather than self-imposed fasts, they needed to obey God.
 - 3. Disobedience had caused the exile (7:

12-14).

E. Ten oracles of encouragement (8:1-23):

1. “I am jealous for Zion” saith Jehovah (8:1-2).
2. “Thus saith Jehovah, I am returned unto Zion” (8:3).
3. Jerusalem shall dwell in peace (8:4-5).
4. Nothing is too hard for Jehovah (8:6).
5. “Thus saith Jehovah . . . I will save my people from the east country . . . and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem” (8:7-8).
6. An exhortation to the temple builders to be strong (8:9-13).
7. “These are the things that ye shall do” (8:14-17).
8. Fasts shall turn into feasts (8:18-19).
9. “Many peoples and strong nations shall come and seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem” (8:20-22).
10. Men will say to the Jews “We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you” (8:23).

II. *A Prophetic History of the Kingdom of God and His Enemies (9:1 - 14:21):*

- A. The burden of Jehovah upon Judah’s enemies (9:1 - 11:17).
1. Jehovah will smite Judah’s neighbors who have harassed her (9:1-8).
 2. Messiah’s reign of peace (9:9-10).
 3. The Lord will save his people from Grecian

enemies (9:11-17). This refers to the Mac-
cabean victories over Antiochus Epiphanes'
Selucid Empire.

4. The restoration of Israel will continue and
succeed (10:1-12).
5. Judgments on Israel for rejecting the good
shepherd (11:1-17).
 - a. Judgments will come on a wicked
nation (11:1-3).
 - b. The allegory of the good shepherd
(11:4-14).
 - 1) The good shepherd's loving care
(11:4-14).
 - 2) The people's lack of appreciation
(11:8).
 - 3) The withdrawal of the good
shepherd (11:9-14).
 - c. An allegory of a foolish shepherd (11:
15-17).
- B. The burden of Jehovah concerning Judah (12:
1-14, 21).
 1. Judah and Jerusalem shall be preserved
until Messiah comes (12:1-9).
 2. Grace will be extended to those who
mourn for their sins (12:10-14).
 3. A fountain for cleansing will be opened
in Jerusalem (13:1-6).
 4. The remnant shall be saved (13:7-9).
- C. The coming day of the Lord against Jerusalem
and the triumph of his kingdom (14:1-21):
 1. Jerusalem will be destroyed (14:1-2).

2. The righteous remnant shall be saved and the enemy punished (14:3-5).
3. The light of the Jewish nation shall be extinguished with the dawning of the gospel age (14:6-7).
4. The living waters of salvation will flow from Jerusalem to all the world (14:8).
5. The blessings of Jehovah's universal reign (14:9-11).
6. The Lord will smite the enemies of new Jerusalem (14:12-15).
7. Gentiles who enter God's kingdom will be blest (14:16).
8. Blessings will be withheld from unbelievers (14:17-19).
9. All will be Holy Unto Jehovah in New Jerusalem (14:20-21).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. Prophetic preaching can revitalize the sagging faith of a people.
2. A nation will not prosper so long as God's house lies in ruins.
3. Only when we return to God will he return unto us (1:3).
4. We see God's wonderful providential care and provision for his people (1:14-21).
5. It was always God's plan to bring all nations of men into his spiritual kingdom.
6. Israel's conflict was actually with Satan

- rather than their neighbors (3:1).
7. Only those who are spiritually clean can serve God acceptably (3:1-4).
 8. Zechariah looked to the writings of the former prophets as God's spokesmen and so should we (1:4).
 9. God's cause will always win, not by might, nor by power, but by his Holy Spirit (4:6).
 10. Before God's work can prosper, sin must be put out of the hearts of his people (5: 5-11).
 11. Christ the high priest now reigns on David's throne (6:12-13).
 12. God's blessings come to those who diligently obey his will (6:15).
 13. Humanly devised religious observances never become more than that in God's sight.
 14. Fasting and feasting are of no value unless united with justice, mercy, truth and righteousness (7:2-7).
 15. We see God the good shepherd, anxious to feed, guide and protect his sheep if they will but follow (11:7).
 16. Christ and his father knew long before his advent that Calvary awaited him (11:12-13; 13:1, 7).
 17. Mountains of difficulty will be removed for God's faithful people (14:3-5).
 18. Some day the knowledge of salvation will reach into all the earth (14:8).

19. Those who refuse to enter God's kingdom cancel the blessings God has promised them (14:17).

APPENDIX A

The Angel of Jehovah

One of the most interesting and fascinating personalities of the entire Bible is "the angel of Jehovah." Perhaps no other Bible character is so little known or understood as he. Who is this angel of Jehovah? The answer to that question will be the object of our study.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ANGELS

To properly understand about *the angel*, we first need to review the characteristics of angels in general. Angels are created beings. They were made through Christ in ancient times (Col. 1:16-17). Being creatures, angels are not divine in nature. They are not omnipotent, omniscient or omnipresent. Angels are holy, but they are capable of sinning (II Pet. 2:4). Their very name indicates that they are *messengers of God*. Man is never allowed to worship angels, since only God may be worshipped (Rev. 22:8-9).

ACTIVITIES OF THE ANGEL OF JEHOVAH

In the Old Testament we find at least 23 separate references to his work for God's people. In Gen. 16:7-14 the angel of Jehovah appears to Hagar, the handmaiden of

Sarah, as she wandered in the wilderness. He promised her a son and a large posterity. "And she called the name of Jehovah that spake unto her, Thou art a God that seeth . . ."

In Gen. 18:1-2, we read that Jehovah appeared unto Abraham at Mamre. "He lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood over against him . . ." He invited them in and fed them a meal. One of them promised that Sarah would bear a son within a year (18:10). When Sarah laughed at the idea, the men claimed that nothing was too hard for Jehovah (18:14). He told Abraham that he was come down to investigate the situation at Sodom. Abraham perceived that he was the judge of all the earth (18:25). After Abraham had secured a promise from the man concerning Sodom, "*Jehovah* went away" (18:32). Then we read that he (Jehovah) rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah "brimstone and fire . . ." (19:24). Notice that while he appeared to be an ordinary man, in reality it was Jehovah that visited Abraham that day.

Gen. 22:9-18 records the story of Abraham offering Isaac. Just as the aged patriarch lifted his hand to plunge the sacrificial knife into his only son, "The angel of Jehovah called unto him out of heaven." When Abraham saw the ram which had been provided he called the place Jehovah-jireh (22:14). And the angel of Jehovah called unto Abraham a second time . . . and said, "By myself have I sworn, *saith Jehovah* . . ." (22:16). He then renewed the covenant promise of the Messiah.

Gen. 28:10-17 tells of Jacob's dream at Bethel. He saw a ladder set up on earth and the top of it reached to heaven, "and behold the angels of God ascending and

descending on it. And, behold Jehovah stood above it . . .” (The footnote says that Jehovah stood beside him.) Moses tells us in Gen. 31:11-13 that it was the angel of Jehovah that was “the God of Bethel” which Jacob saw. When Jacob was returning to his homeland he wrestled with a man throughout the night. The man said, “Thy name shall be called no more Jacob but Israel for thou hast striven with God . . . And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel for said he, I have seen God face to face . . .” (Gen. 32:22-30). Hosea later wrote of Jacob, “In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his manhood he had power with God, yea, he had power over *the angel* . . . *even Jehovah*, the God of hosts . . .” (Hos. 12:3-5).

On his death bed, Jacob blessed his sons by the name of God, the angel who had redeemed him from all evil (Gen. 48:15-16).

When Moses saw the burning bush, “The angel of Jehovah appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush . . . and when Jehovah saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush . . . and he said, draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standeth is holy ground.” When asked by Moses what was his name, he responded that it was “I AM THAT I AM” who was speaking with him (Ex. 3:2-14).

It was “the angel of God who went before the camp of Israel” when they made their exodus from Egypt (Ex. 14:19-20). Yet in Chapter 13:2 of the same book we are told that it was Jehovah who went before them in a pillar of cloud and fire.

Concerning his angel, Jehovah warned Israel, “Behold

I send an angel before thee, to keep thee by the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Take ye heed before him, and hearken unto his voice, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him" (Ex. 23:20-23). Note that they had to obey the angel and that he could forgive their sins.

When the Hebrews made the golden calf, God withdrew his special angel and only promised to send an ordinary angel. This so frightened and distressed Moses and the people that Moses fervently interceded for God to reconsider. Upon their repentance God did decide to send his angel to once again lead them (Ex. 33:1-3, 12-16). Isaiah comments that this was "the angel of his presence" that guided and protected them (63:9). The expression literally means angel of his *face*.

As Joshua prepared the nation to march on Jericho "he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand." When asked, the man replied that he was "prince of the hosts of Jehovah . . . and Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship . . . and the prince of Jehovah's host said unto Joshua, put off thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy" (Josh. 5:13-15). Continuing the narrative in 6:2, we read that "Jehovah said unto Joshua." So this man whom Joshua worshipped was in reality Jehovah.

Three times the book of Judges records appearances of this notable angel. He appeared to the nation at Bochim to reprove them for their disobedience (2:1-5). He appeared to Gideon to commission him to save Israel from Midian. Here again the angel is called Jehovah (6:11-14). In Judges

chapter 13, he appeared to Manoah and his wife and promised them a son . . . Samson. When Manoah offered him food to eat the angel ordered him to “offer it unto Jehovah” as a sacrifice (13:16). “Manoah knew not that he was the angel of Jehovah. And Manoah said unto the angel of Jehovah, What is thy name, that, when thy words come to pass, we may do thee honor? And the angel of Jehovah said unto him, Wherefore asketh thou after my name, seeing it is *wonderful*?” (13:16-18). When the burnt offering was made “the angel of Jehovah ascended in the flame of the altar” (13:20).

In II Kings 19:33-36, Jehovah promised to save Jerusalem and king Hezekiah from the armies of Sennecherib, king of Assyria. “The angel of Jehovah went forth and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred fourscore and five thousand . . .”

When David sinned by taking a military census of his nation, God sent a pestilence upon the nation by his angel. “And David lifted up his eyes and saw the angel of Jehovah standing between earth and heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem.” David and the elders fell upon their faces and prayed (I Chron. 21:9-30).

Daniel saw the angel of Jehovah in 533 B. C. while in exile in Babylon. He saw “a man, clothed in linen whose loins were girded with pure gold of Uphaz; his body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as flaming torches, and his arms and his feet like unto burnished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.” Daniel felt totally undone in his august presence. He had come to reveal the future of the nation to Daniel (10:5-14).

A SUMMARY OF FACTS ABOUT THE ANGEL OF JEHOVAH

We have seen that passages that begin with the angel as their subject commonly shift the names to *Jehovah*, *God* or *Lord* as in Ex. 3:2-6. The angel claims God's power and authority. For example, he forgave sins (Ex. 23:4). But this only God can do (Mk. 2:5-10). He revealed the future (Dan. 9:14). He had the power to judge, to save or destroy (I Chron. 21:14-15). God's people are allowed to worship this angel. But we are strictly forbidden to worship an ordinary angel (Rev. 22:8-9).

WHO THEN IS THE ANGEL OF JEHOVAH?

He is certainly not a created being. He is not a man although he often appeared as such. He is not simply a created angel. Nor is he God the Father, for John tells us that no man hath seen God at any time (John 1:18). Remember that the angel directed Manoah to worship another than himself (Judges 13:15).

The following observations will establish that this mighty angel was no less than the Word of God, the pre-incarnate Christ. The angel of Jehovah told Moses that his name was "I AM THAT I AM," but Jesus claimed that he was I AM (John 8:58).

The angel led Israel through the wilderness and provided their needs (Ex. 14:19-20). Moses reported that Jehovah directed him to smite the rock that the people might drink in the desert. But Paul tells us that the rock they drank of was Christ (I Cor. 10:2-4).

In Joshua, the angel is the prince or leader of Jehovah's host or army (5:14). In Rev. 19 we see the army of heaven and its notable leader. Then John sees his name which is "The Word of God" (19:11-16). In his gospel John identifies the Word of God as the only begotten of the father who became flesh (John 1:1-3, 14).

The angel told Manoah that his name was *wonderful* (Judges 13:16-18). Isaiah in his famous prophecy of Messiah said, "His name shall be called wonderful . . ." (9:6).

Isaiah calls him "The angel of God's presence," which means "of his face" (63:9). The Hebrew writer says Christ is "the very image of his (God's) substance" (1:3). Edward Young says, "The angel of His face is the angel who is His face or in whom His face is made clear. In him the Lord is Himself present" (The Book of Isaiah, Vol. 3, p. 482).

Jacob saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven with angels ascending and descending and Jehovah standing beside it (footnote), (Gen. 28:13). Jesus declares himself to be that ladder (John 1:51).

The angel of Jehovah can be worshipped (Josh. 5:4). No mere man or created angel can be worshipped acceptably (Acts 10:25, 26; Rev. 22:8-9). But Jesus commonly accepted the worship of men (Matt. 28:17).

The angel is repeatedly called Jehovah. But Jesus is also called Jehovah. Isa. 43:11 affirms that there is no savior but Jehovah. But Paul in Titus 2:13 describes Jesus as our great God and savior. Therefore, Jesus is Jehovah. We do not affirm that Jesus is the Father. We simply recognize the fact that inspired writers ascribe the descriptive noun Jehovah to all three of the sacred Godhead. The word

Jehovah describes a person who is eternal and self-existent. This is true of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Daniel saw the angel in his regal glory in 10:5-6. John the apostle saw the same glorious being on Patmos. He saw "one like unto a son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle. And his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace, and his voice as the voice of many waters . . . and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." It was the Son of God who had been crucified but resurrected (Rev. 1:12-18).

These appearances of the angel of Jehovah in ancient times are called theophanies, i. e., when God assumes the form of an angel or a man in order to speak and act visibly and audibly to men, to provide them some revelation or guidance.

These many references demonstrate that our Lord existed from eternity with the Father, just as John affirmed in his biography (John 1:1-3). They tell us of the Savior's activities in behalf of the redeemed during those long years when mankind groped in darkness for a guiding hand, before he came as Jesus, the son of Mary.

In the light of these scriptures let us honor and adore the Messiah who blest man in ancient times as the mighty angel of Jehovah and continues to do so as Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of the living God.

MALACHI — THE MESSENGER OF JEHOVAH

Key Verses: 3:7 - "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith Jehovah of hosts."

4:4-6 - "Remember ye the law of Moses . . . Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Jehovah . . ."

Key Phrases: "Saith Jehovah" and similar expressions are used some 25 times in his 55 verses (compare 1:2).

Key Thought: Remember, repent, return.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

I. *The Author:*

A. It is "the word of Jehovah . . . by Malachi" (1:1).

B. About the author:

1. We know nothing of him save what is written in this book.
2. His name is a shortened form of Malachiah.
 - a. It means "messenger of Jehovah."
 - b. From his special emphasis of the word "messenger," many question whether this was his given name. They suggest it was a description of his mission.
 - c. Perhaps God gave him the name at his call.

- d. The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel and Jerome attribute the book to Ezra. So does John Calvin.
 - e. We shall view Malachi as the name of the author. "If we go behind the name in one case after its meaning, we must be consistent to go behind in every case and the result will be that we shall make every book in the Bible anonymous." (C. L. Petrie).
 - f. For a good discussion on the name, see *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* by H. E. Freeman.
 - 3. He was a fearless reformer whose message was plainly put to the sinners of his day. Fearing God as he did, he feared no man.
 - 4. "He was a strong, vigorous, clean-cut personality." (K. Yates).
 - 5. He was keenly sensitive to the sordidness and negligence of his people.
 - 6. He was an intense patriot.
 - 7. The ancient Hebrews said he was a member of the great synagogue, later known as the Sanhedrin.
- C. His ministry:
- 1. His message was first delivered to the discouraged and embittered citizens of post-exilic Judah.
 - 2. He faced and denounced a cold, formalistic, external type of religion that masqueraded in the name of the true Jehovah

worship.

3. His style of preaching was that of the debater.
 - a. There was little of the poetic in him.
 - b. "His style marks the transition from the free discourse of the prophets to the didactic dialect of the schools of the scribes." (Kirkpatrick).

II. *The Historical Background of Malachi's Work:*

- A. His ministry seems to have been between 460 and 425 B. C. We would date his book 445-432 B. C.
- B. Internationally:
 1. The East was dominated by Persia.
 2. Artaxerxes, who reigned from 465-425 B. C., was on the throne.
 3. The Greek Empire was gaining power:
 - a. They had already blocked the westward expansion of Persia.
 - b. Miltiades and his Greeks defeated the Persians at the battle of Marathon in 490 B. C.
 - c. In 480 B. C. the Greeks made their memorable stand at Thermopylae.
 - d. In 479 Xerxes' army was defeated at Plataea.
 - e. Soon the leadership of the world would shift from Asia to Europe.
 4. The Roman Republic had been born in 509 B. C.
- C. The Hebrews:

1. In 536 B. C. a small remnant had returned from Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel.
 2. Between 520 and 515 B. C., the temple was rebuilt at the encouragement of Haggai and Zechariah.
 3. In 458 B. C. Ezra had come to help reorganize and reestablish the nation's worship.
 4. In 445 B. C. Nehemiah came to lead the people in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.
 - a. He returned to Persia and made a second trip to Jerusalem in 432 B. C.
 - b. Malachi seems to have prophesied between those two visits.
 5. He was thus contemporary with Ezra and Nehemiah.
 6. For a history of Malachi's times, see the book of Nehemiah and chapters 7-10 of Ezra.
- D. The situation in Jerusalem:
1. Religion had degenerated into a cold, lifeless formalism. Unacceptable sacrifices were being offered.
 2. Priests were corrupt and lax in their service.
 3. Skepticism pervaded the land. Many questioned whether in fact, they were God's covenant people.
 4. It seems that many had not found the temporal benefits they had anticipated from the Restoration and this had

embittered them.

5. They were disillusioned, disheartened and decaying spiritually.
6. They blamed God for their ills.
7. They refused to give generously to God.
8. Divorce was common.
9. Many had intermarried with heathen neighbors.
10. God's covenant was held in low esteem and trodden underfoot on every hand.
11. Left to themselves, the Hebrews had sunk into a careless and sordid lifestyle. There was resentment and contempt toward their duty to God.
12. The sins he dealt with are the same as those faced by Ezra and Nehemiah (compare Mal. 2:10-16 with Ez. 9:2; 10:3, 10-44, and Neh. 10:30; 13:23-31, 35c).

III. *About the Book:*

A. It is named after its inspired author.

B. Literary style:

1. His style of writing is prosaic, "though his sentences often fall into the rhythmical parallelism which is such a constant feature in the more elevated oratory of the prophets." (S. R. Driver).
2. His prose is simple, smooth and concise. He states his message clearly.
3. "He is concise and yet lucid, energetic and yet collected." (T. T. Perowne).
4. His book is "the most argumentative in all

- the Old Testament.” (G. L. Robinson).
5. He possesses a vigor and force in his writing which few prophets surpass.
- C. His method is unique. He debates the issues with his audience.
1. Seven times he charges the people with error.
 2. Their objection is stated: “Yet ye say . . .”
 3. He then answers their quibbles.
 4. Compare 1:2-3; 1:6-7; 2:10-16; 2:17; 3:7; 3:8; 3:13.
- D. His teaching method was copied by the later Jewish scribes, i. e., asking and answering questions.
1. For his style he has been called “the Hebrew Socrates.”
 2. He was “the forerunner of scholastic Rabbinism.” (John Patterson).
- E. His purposes in writing:
1. His primary purpose was to encourage his disheartened people to be faithful to their holy calling (1:6; 3:7).
 2. To show the abundant proof of God’s love. Only their sins hindered their full enjoyment thereof (1:2-5).
 3. To remind them of their ingratitude (1:6).
 4. To help prepare them for Messiah’s coming (3:1-4).
 5. To correct their thinking about the coming day of the Lord and to prepare them for it (4:1-6).

F. Malachi and the New Testament:

1. God's choice of Israel over Edom (1:2) is found in Rom. 9:13.
2. His predictions of the messenger of God and Elijah the prophet (3:1; 4:5) are fulfilled in John the Baptist (comp. Matt. 11:10-14; 17:11; Lk. 1:17, 76).
3. His expression "table of the Lord" (1:7) is used by Paul in I Cor. 10:21.
4. His "sun of righteousness" (4:2) is reflected in Luke's "dayspring from on high" (Lk. 1:78).

G. Malachi and Messiah:

1. Two passages are indisputably Messianic:
 - a. 3:1-6, "the Lord whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple . . ."
 - b. 4:4-6, Elijah's coming before "the great and terrible day of Jehovah . . ." This was fulfilled by John the Baptist (Lk. 1:17, 76; Matt. 11:10-14).
2. Two other passages generally thought to be Messianic are questionable:
 - a. 1:1, "My name shall be great among the Gentiles."
 - 1) The King James translators supplied the verb "be" three times in the verse. But the Hebrew does not express the verb. (Jack Lewis).
 - 2) It likely means the Jews of the dispersion were showing more

zeal for Jehovah's worship than those in Palestine. Many converts were being made, God's name was becoming widely known.

- b. 4:2, "the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings."
 - 1) Since the days of Miles Coverdale, this has been applied to Jesus.
 - 2) But the Hebrew has the feminine pronoun "her wings" to accompany the feminine "sun."

H. Malachi and the liberal critics:

- 1. The critics have expended most of their energy denying that Malachi was the name of the author.
- 2. For a good discussion of this point, see H. E. Freeman's *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets*.

I. Miscellaneous facts about the book:

- 1. Malachi is an important source of information on the political and religious status of the Hebrews in the 5th century, Persian period.
- 2. Malachi is "the bridge between the Old and New Testaments." (H. Mears).
- 3. With his words the curtain falls on inspired prophecy and 400 years of silence settle upon the Hebrew people to be lifted by the coming of John the Baptist.

4. The Old Testament opened with man in paradise under the blessing of God. It closes with man under threat of a curse (Mal. 4:6). We can rejoice that our New Testament closes with a blessing (Rev. 22:21).
5. “It is a prophecy of a stultified people and a sensitive God.” (G. C. Morgan).
6. “It is a picture of a people who imagine that they are all right when they are all wrong.” (G. C. Morgan).
7. They seemed to think that Messiah would come and deliver them from their problems. Malachi showed them that he would come alright, not as they thought but rather for judgment upon them.
8. 1:3, “I loved Jacob; but Esau I hated.” Hate here means “loved less” (comp. Deut. 21:15; Lk. 14:26; and Matt. 10:37).
9. Malachi refers to God as “Jehovah of hosts” more than 20 times (1:4). This depicts him as leader of the armies of heaven (comp. Rev. 19:11-16).
10. 1:8, “Present it now unto thy governor.” This indicates that a governor other than Nehemiah was ruling. Likely it was a Persian ruler who held office between Nehemiah’s two terms.
11. The “day of the Lord” is spoken of six different times (3:2; 4:1; etc.).

12. 2:10, "Have we not all one father?" This along with Acts 17:26, 29 is the foundation of the doctrine of the brotherhood of all men.
13. 2:16, "I hate putting away, saith Jehovah."
 - a. "No higher word on marriage was ever spoken, except by Christ himself." (G. A. Smith).
 - b. The Jewish rabbi, Hillel, taught that a man may divorce his wife "even if she spoiled a dish for him, for it is written, 'Because he hath found in her indecency in anything'."
 - c. Rabbi Akiba wrote, "Even if he found another fairer than she, for it is written, 'and it shall be if she finds no favor in his eyes'."
 - d. Fortunately, many Jews followed the teaching of Rabbi Shammai who said, "No one shall divorce his wife unless there shall have been found in her some unchastity."
14. In the synagogues, the Jews read verse 5 again after 4:6 lest they end the reading with a curse.
15. In the Hebrew Bible, Malachi is divided into 3 chapters rather than 4.
16. The Hebrew text of Malachi is well preserved.
- J. What scholars have said about Malachi:
 1. "The book of Malachi is an original and

attractive one . . . not only does it present us with the picture of a man of deep earnestness and incisive moral force contending boldly and independently against the abuses of his time, but it is, from a historical point of view, of great interest and value . . .” (S. R. Driver).

2. “His book is the discerning analysis of a teacher, rather than the impassioned appeal of an evangelist.” (C. J. Harrell).

IV. *A Simple Analysis of Malachi:*

- A. An affirmation of God’s love for Israel (1:1-5).
- B. Charges laid against the Hebrews (1:6 - 2:17).
- C. Prophecies of coming events (3:1 - 4:6).

OUTLINE OF MALACHI:

As we study the text, we can see the preacher in the gate of the city, preaching in the open air. He points the accusing finger and charges them with sin. The crowd questions him, objects and seeks to excuse themselves. As a skilled debater, Malachi takes each objection, gives it a penetrating analysis and answer, and then moves to yet another point.

Introduction: (1:1).

I. *His Thesis: God Still Loves Israel (1:2-5).*

- A. “I have loved you, saith Jehovah” (1:2a).
- B. “Yet ye say, wherein hast thou loved us” (1:2b).
- C. In that you were only disciplined for your sin

while Esau (Edom) was destroyed (1:2c-5).

II. *Denunciation of the Priests and Levites (1:6 - 2:9).*

- A. They had dishonored God (1:6).
 - 1. They allowed polluted bread on the altar (1:7).
 - 2. They offered inferior sacrifices (1:8a).
- B. A biting challenge: Even their governor will not accept their gifts. How dare they come before God with such (1:8b-9)!
- C. God's rejection of them and their vain worship (1:10).
- D. As a rebuke, God tells the proud Jews that others are praising him far more acceptably than they are (1:11).
- E. The priests had profaned his worship (1:12-14).
- F. A curse is threatened against the priests (2:1-4).
- G. The sanctity of the priestly office that God expected (2:5-7).
- H. They had broken the covenant and abused their office (2:8-9).

III. *A Rebuke to the Nation for Promiscuous Divorce and Intermarriage With Heathens (2:10-16).*

- A. In such abuse of their women, they were sinning against God (2:10).
- B. God will "cut off to the man" those who marry the heathen (2:11-12).
- C. The tears of their broken-hearted women kept God from accepting their worship (2:13).
- D. "I hate putting away" saith Jehovah (2:14-16).

IV. *A Day of Judgment Promised (2:17 - 3:6).*

- A. They wearied Jehovah with their evil words

(2:17a).

1. They said, “Everyone that doeth evil is good in the sight of Jehovah and he delighteth in them” (2:17b).

2. They also said, “Where is the God of justice?” (2:17c).

B. God will send his messenger to prepare the way before him (3:1). This was prophetic of John the Baptist (Lk. 7:27; Matt. 11:13-14).

C. Then, the messenger of the covenant will come and judge Israel (3:1b-6).

1. For the righteous it will be a day of gladness (3:3-4).

2. For the wicked it will be a day of terror (3:5-6).

V. *Israel Had Robbed God by Withholding Tithes and Offerings (3:7-12).*

A. Because of this God had cursed them with “hard times” (3:7-9).

B. They are challenged to “prove God’s goodness” by generously giving to him (3:10-12).

VI. *They Had Said, “It is Vain to Serve God” (3:13-4:3).*

A. Many questioned the profit of faithfulness (3:13-15).

B. But God will remember the righteous (3:16-18).

C. And he will destroy the wicked (4:1).

D. The sun of righteousness will come to bless the faithful (4:2-3). This appears to be the antithesis of burning up the wicked.

VII. *Closing Exhortation to Faithfulness (4:4-6).*

A. Remember the Law of Moses (4:4).

- B. A promise that before that awful day of judgment, God would send Elijah to reconcile Israel, lest they all be destroyed (4:5-6). This "Elijah" would be John the Baptist (Matt. 11:10; 17:12-13).

LESSONS TO REMEMBER:

1. An inadequate view of God will result in unacceptable worship.
2. God wants stable homes; he hates divorce (2:16).
3. Insincerity in worship is an insult to God (1:8-10). Empty worship is worse than no worship at all. Better to close the house of worship (1:10).
4. We must honor God by showing respect for his church and its ordinances.
5. He that lives in willful sin need not hope to please God with costly sacrifices.
6. One's spiritual health can be determined by the way he gives to God.
7. God provides our material blessings according to our standard of giving to him (3:10-11).
8. When God's ministers compromise their ideals it affects the masses of the worshippers (2:8).
9. When ministers fail to study and teach truth and morals, the people suffer.
10. Cheap religion avails nothing, and sacrifices

grudgingly given are rejected by God.

11. Each person may determine for himself whether the day of the Lord is to be one of weal or woe (4:1-2).
12. When worship is a weariness and a thing to be snuffed at, spiritual stupor will always follow (1:13).
13. Disregard for marriage vows is disastrous to the individual, the family, society and the nation.

APPENDIX A

Fulfilled Prophecy

In his memorable Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said “Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill” (Matt. 5:17).

Prophetic material fills a considerable portion of our Bible, more than most folks realize. Of the Old Testament’s 23,210 verses, 6,641 contain predictive material, or 28½ percent. Out of the New Testament’s 7,914 verses, 1,711 contain predictive material or 21½ percent. So, for the entire Bible’s 31,124 verses, 8,352 contain predictive material or 27 percent of the whole.”¹

Surely one of the great proofs of the inspiration of the Scriptures is the hundreds of fulfilled prophecies. One of the strongest types of evidence for Jesus’ divine origin and mission is the more than 300 prophecies relating to his life and mission. No other area of study can be more exciting and rewarding than that of Biblical prophecies and their fulfillment. To that study we now direct our attention.

PROPHECY DEFINED

To understand the subject of prophecy, we must first understand what a prophet was and what he did. The best definition is a demonstration, and that we have in the case of Moses and Aaron. “And Jehovah said unto Moses, See, I have made thee as God to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother

¹J. Barton Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 13.

shall be thy prophet; Thou shalt speak all that I command thee; and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharoah” (Exodus 7:1-2). This is amplified earlier in Exodus 4:15-16. “And thou (Moses) shalt speak unto him (Aaron), and put the words in his mouth . . . And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people, and it shall come to pass, that he shall be to thee a mouth, and thou shalt be to him as God.” Thus a prophet was a “mouthpiece” or a spokesman for God. David explained his role in recording God’s will in II Sam. 23:2: “the Spirit of Jehovah spake by me. And his word was upon my tongue.” Some have mistakenly thought the prophets were primarily future tellers, but the careful student recognizes they were fundamentally proclaimers of God’s will, preachers of his message, and to a much lesser degree foretellers. This is exhibited by Paul in I Cor. 14:3: “But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men edification, and exhortation, and consolation.”

William Webster defines prophecy as “God’s communication to the church to be her light and comfort in time of trouble and perplexity.”² Dr. Pye Smith describes prophecy as “a declaration made by a creature, under the inspiration and commission of the omniscient God, relating to an event or series of events, which have not taken place at the time the prophecy is uttered, which could not have been certainly foreknown by any science or wisdom of man.”³

The apostle John declares that “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. 19:10). By that he

²Patrick Fairbairn, *Imperial Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. 5, p. 302.

³*Ibid.*

means that Jesus stands as the principal theme and ultimate goal of prophecy.

VARIOUS TYPES OF PROPHECY

Prophecy is not all of one type and kind. A discerning student will note at least six different categories of prophecy recorded in Scripture. In passing, we note that *false prophets* were busy issuing their uninspired predictions. Thus we have in Jer. 28:1-4 a false prophecy of Hananiah who predicted that the Hebrews would be freed from Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian yoke in two years, by about 594. He was rebuked by Jeremiah and discredited by the failure of his prediction. Moses had earlier said "when a prophet speaketh in the name of Jehovah, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which Jehovah hath not spoken: the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously . . ." (Deut. 18:22).

There are *general prophecies* which predict blessings or curses in broad general terms with few if any details. For example, Isa. 14:1: "For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land." The context helps us to see this as a prediction of restoration after the Babylonian exile. Numerous prophecies are of this category.

Some prophecies are *specific* as to details. Thus in Isa. 44:28 God wrote "of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying of Jerusalem, She shall be built; and of the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid." These words were written no later than 700 B. C. Cyrus led the Medes and Persians to world dominance in

538 and commissioned the restoration of the Jewish nation in 536. Daniel's majestic prophecy of 70 weeks predicted with great accuracy the years of the public ministry of Messiah and his death in the midst of his 34th year. Accompanying his death would be the end of sacrifice and oblation of the Mosaic system, and the reconciliation of sinners. Following these events would be the destruction of the Jewish state by the Romans (Dan. 9:24-27).

Many prophecies are written in highly *figurative* and poetic language: for example, the description of the character and conduct of those in Messiah's kingdom. "And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together. And a little child shall lead them . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah" (Isa. 11:6-9). Premillennialists continue to misapply this and expect a literal change in the nature of the beasts. The key is found in the 9th verse: "They (disciples of Messiah) shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain (Messiah's kingdom)."

Some prophecies have a *dual application*, i. e., they had a fulfillment for that contemporary age and a remote or distant fulfillment when Messiah came. The clearest illustration of this is seen in Nathan's promise to David. "When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod

of men . . .” (II Sam. 7:12-14). In I Chron. 22:6-11, David tells us that Solomon was the first object of this prediction. He says “the word of Jehovah came to” him saying Solomon “shall build a house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father . . .” In Acts 13:33 and 34, Paul tells us that Jesus was the ultimate recipient of “the holy and sure blessings of David.” Numerous passages in the prophets we would interpret as mixed restoration (from Babylonian captivity) and Messianic promises. (See Isa. 35:1-10).

Comparing some of the fulfilled prophecies of the New Testament with their Old Testament counterparts, we can see a *typical* use of prophecy. Joseph took the young child and his mother and departed into Egypt “. . . that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt did I call my son” (Matt. 2:14-15). The citation directs us to Hosea 11:1 which says, “When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.” The context clearly applies that passage to ancient Israel’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Matthew’s use draws a comparison between the two events related to coming out of Egypt. No one reading Hosea would ever have the remotest idea it referred to the flight of Joseph’s family, had not Matthew told us. Another similar application is found in Matt. 2:18. “A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children . . .” A comparison of Jer. 31:15 shows the verse initially had reference to the sorrow that came when the Babylonians ravaged Judah. The weeping in both cases was alike bitter.

Speaking of typical prophecy, we should briefly

mention that great number of Old Testament people, institutions and events which the sacred writers said foreshadowed the Messianic Age. Paul wrote that the laws relating to meat, drink, feast days, new moon and sabbath day were "a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's" (Col. 2:16-17). The Hebrew writer describes the Mosaic ordinances as "a copy and shadow of the heavenly things . . ." (Heb. 8:5). Thus Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem, is typical of Christ, who is both king and high priest (Heb. 7:1 - 8:4). The Hebrews' deliverance from Egypt is typical of our salvation from sin (I Cor. 10:1-6). Since these types and antitypes are generally considered as a separate order, we will pursue them no further.

THE PURPOSES OF PROPHECY

At least five purposes of prophecy are easily discovered. By the very nature of his office, the prophet was a spokesman for God *who revealed his will to the people*. Thus in Jer. 7:1-3, "The word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah saying . . . Thus saith Jehovah . . . Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place." The details given included: "thoroughly execute justice;" "oppress not the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow;" "shed not innocent blood" and "walk not after other gods." Such prophesying made no prediction, but did make known the will of the Lord.

Prophecy gave the Hebrews *hope during the dark days of trial and tribulation*. When the Babylonian hordes were pressing the battle against Judah and the prospect of national collapse was imminent, Jeremiah comforted them

with his predictions. "I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith Jehovah" (51:24). "Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise again because of the evil that I will bring upon her . . ." (51:64). Though the nation would be taken into captivity, he promised "For thus saith Jehovah, After seventy years are accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good work toward you, in causing you to return to this place" . . . home (Jer. 29:10). Of course we offer but a sampling.

The prophets *pointed God's people toward his coming Messiah and his kingdom*. More than 300 details of the glorious reign were given by those men of God. Isaiah wrote, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:6-7). As the angel told John, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10).

The ancient prophecies fulfilled in Christ's life and death provided convincing evidence that he was truly the Son of God come down from heaven. To the two disciples traveling to Emmaus, he said "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the

things concerning himself” (Lk. 24:25-27). Over and over again the apostles appealed to the prophecies to establish Christ’s claims. Peter said to Cornelius, “To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name everyone that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts 10:43).

Even today the prophecies read and examined will *create faith in the honest heart*. John concludes his life of Christ saying, “Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book: but these are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God . . .” (John 20:30-31). Jehovah challenged the idolaters in Isaiah’s day “ . . . who hath showed this from ancient times; who hath declared it of old? have not I, Jehovah? and there is no God else besides me . . .” (Isa. 45:21). Fulfilled prophecy demands an omniscient God as its author.

SOME RULES FOR INTERPRETING PROPHECY

- A. It is essential to understand the historical background of the prophet and his message.
- B. You will need to ascertain the meaning and significance of geographical references, proper names and events, plants and animals.
- C. Since all prophecy is not predictive, determine if the passage under consideration is didactic or predictive.
- D. If the scripture under consideration is predictive, has it already been fulfilled? Is its threat or promise conditional?
- E. Should an inspired New Testament speaker or writer

declare that a given prophecy has been fulfilled in a specific way, that settles the matter.

- F. Search to see if the subject being studied is treated elsewhere in Scripture. If so, a comparative study is imperative.
- G. Be careful to keep the context in mind. Remember the flow of the passage which often transcends chapter and verse divisions.
- H. In studying the prophets, be aware that some elements will be brief and temporary in their application.
- I. To properly understand the prophets, pay special attention to their poetic style which is highly figurative and full of metaphorical and symbolic expressions.
- J. The prophets do not generally observe our Western system of chronological arrangement. Their writings are arranged by subject, rather than time sequence.
- K. Some prophecies have dual meanings and refer to different events — one near, the other in the distant future; the one temporal, the other spiritual.
- L. Predictions of blessings or judgments are often conditional and may or may not be fulfilled depending upon the response of the recipients. Jer. 18:7-8 notes, “. . . if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.”⁴

⁴Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, pp. 227-232.

SOME EXAMPLES OF PROPHECIES ABOUT CITIES AND NATIONS

Among the most remarkable of the many prophecies are those relating to the great cities and nations of antiquity. Space will allow us to consider only a few examples. We first notice God's predictions about the great Phoenician city of Tyre. Ezekiel, God's prophet of the Babylonian exile, wrote:

“Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold I am against thee, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth its waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyre, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her a bare rock. She shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea . . . For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will bring upon Tyre Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, from the north with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and a company, and much people. He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field; and he shall make forts against thee, and raise up the buckler against thee. And he shall set his battering engines against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers. . . . And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise; and they shall break down thy walls and destroy thy pleasant houses; and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the

midst of the water. . . . And I will make thee a bare rock; thou shalt be a place for the spreading of nets; thou shalt be built no more; for I Jehovah have spoken it, saith the Lord Jehovah” (Ezek. 26:3-14).

Careful examination reveals the following particulars in Ezekiel’s prediction:

Nebuchadnezzar would destroy mainland Tyre (vs. 8).

Many nations would participate in her final destruction (vs. 3).

She would be left as a bare rock (vs. 4).

Fishermen would spread their nets upon her site (vs. 5).

The debris of the ruined mainland city would be cast into the water (vs. 12).

She would be built no more (vs. 14).

Tyre would never be found again (vs. 21).⁵

“If Ezekiel had looked at Tyre in his day and had made these seven predictions in human wisdom, there would have been only one chance in 75,000,000 of their all coming true.”⁶ It is a matter of historical record that all of Ezekiel’s predictions were fulfilled as spoken.

Nebuchadnezzar attacked Tyre within three years of Ezekiel’s writing. After a thirteen year siege, the Tyrians submitted. The bulk of her citizens fled to an island some one-half mile from the coast. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed

⁵ Josh McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, p. 285.

⁶ *Ibid.*

mainland Tyre. The island city remained for several generations.

Alexander the Great called upon the Tyrians to surrender to him in 333. When they refused to do so, his troops demolished the ruins of mainland Tyre and of the debris built a causeway some 200 feet wide out to the island. Following a bitter battle, the island fortress fell. The Greeks laid it to the ground.

Although the city experienced numerous revivals over the centuries, she finally was ruined by the Moslems in 1291 and remains in that condition today. The site of the former commercial hub of the Mediterranean world is now a fishing village where the fishermen spread their nets.

BABYLON

Late in the eighth century B. C., Isaiah wrote:

“And Babylon . . . shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there. But wild beasts of the desert shall be there . . .” (Isa. 13:19-21).

“I will also make it a possession for the porcupine, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith Jehovah of hosts” (Isa. 14:23).

The following particulars are noted in this remarkable prediction:

The world's greatest city would become like

Sodom and Gomorrah (13:19).

It would never again be inhabited (13:20).

Arabs would not pitch their tents there (13:20).

Shepherds would not frequent the locale (13:20).

Wild creatures of the desert would inhabit the ruins (13:21).

It would be covered with swampy marshes (14:23).

Babylon's massive walls stretched 14 miles in each direction and encompassed some 196 square miles. Its double walls were surrounded by a moat 30 feet wide. The outer walls towered 311 feet high and were 87 feet thick. Its 100 gates were of solid brass. The Euphrates flowed under the walls. It was believed to be invincible. But in 538 the Persians diverted the Euphrates and marched their troops under those impregnable walls. The over-confident defenders were engaged in a drunken orgy and had left the inner gates unguarded. The city fell in a night without a struggle. After a lengthy period of decline and decay it was finally abandoned in the Seleucid period, 300-100 B. C. Strabo, the Roman traveler, visited the site in the reign of Augustus (27 B. C. - 14 A. D.) and observed, "the great city has become a desert."⁷ Thus it remains to this day. The interested student would be profitted by reading the article on present day Babylon in *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, pp. 314-320.

⁷ Ibid., p. 317.

MESSIAH

No study of fulfilled prophecy would be complete without a discussion of some of the great Messianic prophecies.

Perhaps the most spectacular of the Messianic predictions is Isaiah's spoken to King Ahaz in 734 B. C. "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (7:14). No less an authority than Matthew details the fulfillment of this remarkable promise. After recording the words of the angel to Joseph, revealing the Holy Spirit as the cause and occasion of Mary's pregnancy, he adds:

"And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins. Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us." (Matt. 1:21-23).

Luke, himself a medical doctor, verifies in his record the unique circumstances of our Lord's virgin conception. (See Luke 1:26-36).

Micah the Morashtite wrote,

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, which art little among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old,

from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she who travaileth hath brought forth . . . And he shall stand, and shall feed his flock in the strength of Jehovah . . . he shall be great unto the ends of the earth. And this man shall be our peace.” (5:2-5a).

In this prophecy of Micah we see the following details:

Messiah’s place of nativity: Bethlehem (vs. 2a).

That Messiah would be a ruler in Israel (vs. 2b).

He would be born of a woman (vs. 3).

The Messiah would be a male (vs. 4).

His reign would be universal (vs. 4).

He would be a king of peace (vs. 5).

The fulfillment of this remarkable description of Messiah’s birth and ministry is common knowledge to every Bible student.

Space fails us to consider the spectacular predictions of Isaiah 52:11 - 53:12 where Christ’s suffering, death and victory are vividly portrayed. Also, we would cite the eager student to the 22nd Psalm, where his death on the cross is foretold in great detail.

May the few examples we have reviewed serve to stir the appetites of our readers for a more extended study. Hopefully the background information and guidelines for interpretation will be helpful in properly discerning the meanings.

We should remember these words of Peter:

“Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care,

trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you . . . Even angels long to look into these things.” (I Peter 1:10-12 NIV).

Surely this should inspire us to eagerly search the Scriptures and especially the prophets, for the benefit of our own souls.

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